

**THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET AT
DORSET MUNICIPAL COUNCIL CHAMBERS, SCOTTSDALE ON TUESDAY
5 OCTOBER 2004.**

LILYDALE TO SCOTTSDALE: BRIDPORT MAIN ROAD TO OAK DENE ROAD

Mr GREG MILLAR AND **Ms DENISE McINTYRE**, DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE, ENERGY AND RESOURCES AND **Mr JOHN MARTIN**, MANAGER, CORPORATE SERVICES, DORSET COUNCIL WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIR (Mr Harriss) - Welcome, Greg and Denise. Thank you very much for the information you were able to share with us at the site inspection. Would you like to speak to the submission of DIER and then questions will flow from that.

Mr MILLAR - I will run through the project, commencing at the junction of Bridport Main Road and Listers Road, explaining the main points of the project moving through the works.

At the Bridport Main Road-Listers Road junction, the intention is to upgrade that junction to provide a dedicated left-turn lane and right-turn lane for vehicles travelling from Scottsdale into Listers Lane and from Bridport into Listers Lane. The original intention was not to provide a left deceleration lane but in consultation with the residents at that junction the noise issue was raised and providing the left-turn deceleration lane will eliminate the necessity for any cars following the left-turners having to brake. With two lanes being provided, it effectively allows for free flow of traffic on the Bridport Main Road. That junction also will be finished off in an asphalt seal to reduce the impact of noise at the junction. From the junction, moving down Listers Lane, there is a proposal not to do any works on the following 750 metres of Listers Lane, which is a fairly recently constructed local road by Dorset Council. There is adequate width on that road and the pavement is in fairly good condition.

Moving down towards the end of Listers Lane, we then commence the new construction work which involves a significant cut through a curve down across the Hurst Creek valley where there is a significant fill. The fill impacts on one of the dams but in the design work there is potential for increased capacity within those dams, subject to application by the property owners for that additional capacity. Part of Listers Lane in that area is being retained to give access to two properties which would otherwise have to negate what would be something like a 10-metre cut. It was more prudent to retain the existing road as a service road to those properties. Originally the alignment was a much-greater sweeping curve that had a significant impact on the farming operations for the property in that area. We have brought it back closer to the existing Listers Road alignment.

Moving down through the valley itself, where there are a number of dams, the intention is to remain with the existing road alignment because there is a relatively narrow corridor through there that is available to us. The extra width is being obtained by pushing into the embankment which feeds up to the railway line at the top of that embankment. We are looking for a natural cut situation; where that is not achievable, we are providing retaining walls. This would enable us to put guard fencing along that entire valley to protect any errant vehicles from the steep drop into the dams themselves.

The project finishes shortly after the end of the dam on a relatively straight section of road. It does not preclude any future options which may be investigated beyond that point. The project that is before the committee in itself is very much sustainable as a stand-alone project. The total cost of the work we estimate at \$4.3 million.

Mr BEST - We heard this morning the department's view that obviously this will be the route service for north-eastern Tasmania. I asked a few questions about how you see the strategy coming together, how soon you think this would happen. I know we have a number of people who have other views and I am interested in the general strategy of the department in relation to the road itself.

Mr MILLAR - Should the committee accept this particular project and endorse it, we are in a position to advertise more or less immediately. If that occurred, we would probably look at construction starting early this coming calendar year, with completion of this first section in the following summer.

Mr BEST - How do you think it is going to take on in terms of it becoming the main road?

Ms McINTYRE - I think it is a matter of opinion, but it is a matter of personal choice. There are no short-term plans to change the B-double route from Bridport Main Road, to my knowledge, at this point in time. Therefore it will depend on how much these improvements we are undertaking in this round of funding change people's attitudes and desire to use this particular road.

Mr MILLAR - There are significant safety benefits in doing just this section alone, particularly with the dams up through Hurst Creek. Vehicles may be leaving the existing road, which is totally undetected. So on safety grounds alone, there are significant advantages in this work that is being proposed.

Mr BEST - In some submissions we have had concerns expressed about safety - that is, large vehicles believe they will be forced now to travel through towns where previously they could move around that situation. What is your view on that?

Mr MILLAR - I think it will be safer for both larger vehicles and the normal travelling public in that there will be extra width on that road. As I have already pointed out, there will be additional safety features such as a guard fence to protect any vehicles from those hazards.

Ms McINTYRE - The other thing is that, at the moment, the Golconda Road leads traffic into the narrow town streets of Scottsdale. With Listers Lane as part of the major road network, that brings people onto major roads and takes them out of the narrow side streets, and sorts out existing traffic management issues, one would think.

Mr MILLAR - There is another safety issue, too, which should be considered with the alignment that we are proposing. At the present moment the existing Golconda Road coming into Scottsdale crosses a railway crossing, with no protection on it, so the adoption of this route would therefore eliminate that safety issue as well.

Mr BEST - Any thoughts about sight distances? In the plans we looked at entry-exit points. Are there any differences there, in regard to safety issues, from the Tasman Highway or is it pretty much comparable?

Mr MILLAR - Most of the accesses are on Listers Lane, and particularly in the section marked we will not be reconstructing them - they will stay as is. The road itself, and therefore any sight considerations, has been designed for a 80 kph design standard and we have looked to meet those sorts of standards.

Mrs NAPIER - I have a further question in relation to the access. You indicated that those accesses would be maintained. What guarantee can you provide that they would be maintained in the long term?

Ms McINTYRE - I'm not sure I understand the question.

Mrs NAPIER - Will the access onto Listers Road, associated with the properties that border on either side - and the same company or people own both sides of the road - it has been suggested that the existing accesses will be maintained. What long-term guarantees can you provide that those accesses will be maintained?

Ms McINTYRE - We have considered this at length and under normal circumstances we would attempt to remove all access or all paddock access to a State road where we are undertaking works. In this case we accept that the farm is managed both sides of the road and that the access is an easy crossing and short lengths of time on the road are required to maintain the existing farm management. We can say that, as long as there are no safety issues in the future, they will remain and be used as they are currently.

Mrs NAPIER - Irrigation spray quite often comes up as policy in country areas. The significance of the acreage there is because of the capacity to use nearby water. What impact do you anticipate that any regulation or action on spray on roads might have?

Mr MILLAR - I'm not aware of any regulations at the present moment to control spraying onto the roads, as you are suggesting.

Ms McINTYRE - I can think of some areas along the Bass Highway where signs are used; I am not aware that it is a major issue or is likely to be a major issue in the future.

Mrs NAPIER - You gave a response in relation to the West Minstone Road. We discussed this when we were out there, but just for the record: there has been some concern expressed from not just the nearby property owners but also other transport companies and companies involved in harvesting that they will be forced to go through Scottsdale more often than they are currently if access to the West Minstone Road, as is currently provided, is closed off. What consideration have you given to the impact of increasing farming traffic through the town?

Mr MILLAR - There is an offer there to the landowners that we would be prepared to construct a farm track to at least alleviate their difficulty, which would take them from Listers Lane to the existing old Golconda Road. It is true that there would be other people who would then not have that particular access but the numbers involved, I suspect, are relatively small. Those numbers have never been quantified by any parties.

Mrs NAPIER - I think we received representation from the council that summarised and reminded us all about how many studies have been done on this road. You could just about line the pavement from here to Launceston with the studies that have been done on it, including the first one back in 1987.

Mr MILLAR - There were some even further back than that, but I thought I had better not bring too much paper!

Mrs NAPIER - What ongoing monitoring is being done of the usage of the Listers Lane access, the Golconda Road access to Scottsdale and The Sideling? You talked about the change of people's attitudes, but I am aware that originally there were some figures that showed that 50 per cent of heavy traffic, bar the B-doubles, used The Sideling, as compared to the Listers Lane avenue. Has there been ongoing monitoring of traffic that has looked at Listers Lane and Golconda Road access to Scottsdale and The Sideling?

Ms McINTYRE - We have periodic reviews, bearing in mind that we have traffic counters who work statewide and are under significant pressure. I am not sure; I can't say exactly when the last count was done, but it would be very useful to undertake a count before works commence and then periodically to see what changes are occurring. It has not been undertaken to date; it was undertaken throughout the study process to see what changes had been made. Obviously we have to be mindful of the rail change into the north-east of the State, so now is probably a very good time to set up a traffic count and then periodically review that.

Mrs NAPIER - When would the last traffic counts have been done?

Ms McINTYRE - I will have to find out.

Mrs NAPIER - If we could be provided with that information, it would be useful.

Mr MILLAR - If the committee so wished, it would not be a significant job to do a traffic count, for instance, at the junction of Listers Lane-Bridport Main Road, which would pick up the percentage of heavies going through that junction area, and perhaps any other junction areas that the committee decides to have the figures on.

Mrs NAPIER - I was interested that you referred to a change of people's attitudes. I guess the north-east has had lots of changes of attitude, whether it is The Sideling or the Lilydale-Golconda or just the Flinders Highway connection or indeed, as we discussed, the solution for heavy traffic to Bell Bay. The last two reports talked about a potential link down through the Pipers Brook road, off the Lilydale-Golconda upgrade, for heavier traffic. What is the department's current thinking about what the route that we are trying to expedite will be?

Ms McINTYRE - This has been decided, through a series of studies, as being the strategic route for the future economic development of the north-east of the State. It is considered to be the most direct route. That is where we are at and that is where this project has come from. We can't force people to use this and we certainly don't intend to force trucks onto this road immediately. It is considered that as improvements occur people will be encouraged to use this road over, say, The Sideling. Bridport Main Road is a different issue. In terms of connection between Launceston and the north-east, the more work we can do on this road, the more attractive it will become and the more it will be used. It is already established as being a tourist route to the north-east; it is already nationally advertised as the touring route.

Mrs NAPIER - What kind of forward planning is there for projects beyond the NETAS study on the route? Once we get this one built, which I think people would welcome, what forward work has been done by the department on the next section of the route?

Ms McINTYRE - At this moment in time we have a maintenance-addressed budget, as you would probably be aware, for the road program. We are working on addressing that issue, so as to the enhancement for this road and other statewide roads, I can't give you any time limit for any forward programs.

Mrs NAPIER - Through you, Mr Chairman - I guess from the committee's point of view, we have all waited for a long time to get a clear indication of exactly where the new road was going to go once the decision was made. Yes it will be the Lilydale-Golconda, and then you've got the question: which route will it actually take? I think option A brought the road out near where the tip is. Why was that part of the route rejected? It would have avoided farm land and perhaps even given a better connection for Bridport.

Ms McINTYRE - It was rejected through the consultation process for a number of reasons. At the end of the first study it rated very low - in fact, it rated fourth in the four options, A, B, C and D. It rated the lowest of all the options in terms of a better approach to Scottsdale. Scottsdale is regarded as the focal point and where the productivity is coming through. Bridport is a residential and recreational area predominantly, so the focal point is Scottsdale. Oak Dene Road, in that vicinity, is several kilometres away from Scottsdale. There were amenity issues for residents. There were a number of small holdings in that area. It would have meant a total road construction. We were looking at constructing roads from Glen Moore Park through to Scottsdale, so it would have been a total new alignment. The council would have been left with their safety issue through the dams. There were a number of factors involved in the decision.

Mrs NAPIER - What were the costings?

Ms McINTYRE - I don't have the costings with me. This is high-level conceptual costing and they may not be terribly relevant because we've moved on and we have a lot more information.

Mrs NAPIER - I understand that, but I think it also puts on the record why some of the decisions are being made.

Ms McINTYRE - This is straight from the NETAS study and, as I said, it was high-level conceptuels. Scottsdale A was \$8.5 million - it was also 13.79 kilometres long. That was the new section and then we came onto Bridport Road.

Mr BEST - How much longer was that?

Ms McINTYRE - It was 13.79 kilometres long; it was the longest road alignment.

Mrs NAPIER - That meant the multiplier effect on it to suggest -

Ms McINTYRE - That is why I am saying it is not necessarily relevant because we have a lot more information about specifics.

Mrs NAPIER - And B?

Ms McINTYRE - B was south of the southern alignment. It is a bit difficult without the plans.

Scottsdale A was 13.79 kilometres and \$8.5 million; Scottsdale B was 11.04 kilometres and \$9.02 million; Scottsdale D was 11.04 kilometres and \$8.2 million; and existing road upgrade was 12.73 kilometres and \$6.76 million. We now have a western approaches to Scottsdale project, which is 9.5 kilometres in total length. The first section of that is the \$4.3 million project we are looking at now.

Mrs NAPIER - So C was, in effect, the cheapest option?

Mr BEST - Where does this one fit in the current proposal?

Ms McINTYRE - This proposal was a combination of a couple of the proposals in here. It was an existing alignment upgrade plus new roads.

Mrs NAPIER - When you said that you were going to monitor the change in people's attitudes, what does that mean? How are you going to do that?

Ms McINTYRE - Monitoring the change in the uptake of usage of the Lilydale-Golconda, so it would be by traffic counting, I would say.

Mrs NAPIER - So you would need to do a pre-count?

Ms McINTYRE - Yes.

Mr MILLAR - As I indicated, that is certainly not a difficult job. Normally on a junction situation we would do an eight-hour count, which looks at the peak times - morning, lunchtime and evening - and it is a recognised traffic engineering tool to expand that information out into average annual daily traffic figures.

Mrs NAPIER - I have one more question on the West Minstone. Is it technically feasible to make a connection of the Golconda or West Minstone roads to this new road that is being constructed?

Mr MILLAR - I would suggest that just about everything is technically feasible. That option was looked at, but it was discounted primarily on safety grounds, particularly as the vehicles that would be using it would be heavy farm vehicles coming out of that junction from virtually a standing situation, getting onto the main road at a very slow speed with much faster vehicles approaching from behind. That was seen as a dangerous situation.

Mrs NAPIER - Has there been discussion with council about what the proposed traffic routes might be? Presumably now they will be swung back onto the Bridport-Scottsdale road for a longer period of time with the connection through either the main street or the high school street. Have there been any discussions on that and the impact it will have?

Ms McINTYRE - We had discussions some time ago and council indicated no concern about farm traffic through the town streets.

Mr MILLAR - I'd suggest that relative to the volume of traffic using Listers Lane, the traffic that you're considering, would be a significantly small figure.

Mrs NAPIER - I think you indicated when we were at the site that the section coming up the hill leading to Listers Lane was likely to be an 8 per cent incline?

Mr MILLAR - That's correct.

Mrs NAPIER - I think you compared that to coming up the Southern Outlet.

Mr MILLAR - That's correct. That Hobart Southern Outlet from Davey Street up to the top of Mount Nelson is a 10 per cent grade, so it is slightly flatter than that. Perhaps it should also be pointed out that the 8 per cent grade on this particular route is sustained only over a relatively short distance of something under 300 metres.

CHAIR - Just before you go off that, Mrs Napier, you mentioned that you are interested in traffic counts. Is there anything specific you want to suggest to Greg and Denise that you would like to see monitored?

Mrs NAPIER - Obviously in terms of the traffic works, I guess it would be comparing the traffic that is using The Sideling, Listers Lane and the Golconda access road. It would be interesting to see just where the traffic is moved to.

Mr MILLAR - I presume you are more interested in the traffic mix. Certainly we can get you the total volume.

Mrs NAPIER - Well, you've got rate plus heavier traffic.

Mr MILLAR - We can provide that. It may take a few weeks but it is relatively easy, as I say.

Mrs NAPIER - I guess I am also particularly interested when we look at forward planning, and it also helps us understand whether our theories are right.

Mr HALL - I have a question, which is related to one raised by Mrs Napier earlier, in regard to accesses. I can fully understand the anxiety of the landowners - the Bissett family - on both sides of this proposed road where I think they have something like 16 or 19 accesses. I think you mentioned, Denise, that if there was a safety issue then there was potential for those accesses to be closed off. Obviously that would cause a lot of issues for that particular farming family in running their operation. Is there any comfort that you can give them in terms of constructing, say, an underpass or whatever, if accesses were starting to be closed off?

Ms McINTYRE - We would certainly look at something like that, if that ever occurred. We would look at it in the context of the safety issue. We have farm gates onto major highways all around the State and they don't cause any problems. I was expressing a worst-case scenario that I can't guarantee forever, but in that worst-case scenario, if there was a safety issue, we would have to look at it. We don't look at it and say, 'This is what we're going to do', we negotiate with owners, so the result will be something they can live with as well.

Mr HALL - I just go back to Mr Millar. We looked where the road went down through a very steep gully and obviously there is a lot of fill to be put in there and quite a lot of engineering works. Was it possible at all to have swung the road out further to the south and not have to go through that gully where you are going to put in an addition to the dam wall?

Mr MILLAR - Am I correct in suggesting that it effectively goes on the other side of the dam's alignment? To get down to that level you would still need significant earthworks. You might recall that the existing Listers Lane goes along the straight fairly sharply to the left and effectively goes down the face of the escarpment to reach the existing valley alignment. You still have to get from the level of the existing Listers Lane down to the level of the Golconda Road at the bottom of those dams. I would suggest that you are still looking at significant engineering works to achieve that. Also, I image that it could have a similar impact on the existing farming operation that the current proposed alignment would have.

Ms McINTYRE - The initial road alignment that we had through that area looped out further into the Bissett property and removed the need for a structure, and it was a much better grade. After consultation with the family and listening to their concerns, we had our designers look at this whole area again. That is when they came up with this alignment, which is a steeper grade and includes the dam structure. Our initial proposal was for a gently-sweeping curve through and around the dam.

Mr HALL - Do we have a quantum of the actual land that the Bissett family will lose through this?

Mr MILLAR - I don't have that with me today, but that can be provided.

Mr HALL - Something that intrigued me was a fitness track being factored into the project. Can you elaborate on that?

Mr MILLAR - Currently, as I understand it, it is quite a popular walk to do a circuit out of Scottsdale, down Listers Lane and back along the old Golconda Road. That was raised

at an earlier stage and we are quite prepared to keep that facility. That is why it is being provided. There are quite a few people who already do that circuit and we saw no reason why they shouldn't in the future be able to do that.

Mr HALL - In terms of infrastructure, will it be signposted or -

Mr MILLAR - No, we'd be looking at forming a gravel footpath, if you like, through that area.

Mr HALL - It caters for cyclists as well?

Mr MILLAR - No, the cyclists weren't actually considered.

Mrs NAPIER - Cyclists need to be considered.

Mr MILLAR - It can be a shared facility, if you like. We certainly weren't going into a huge engineering undertaking. As I said, it would just be a red gravel footpath.

CHAIR - Is that on top of the cut near the Bissett's property?

Mr MILLAR - That is quite correct.

CHAIR - So that would be the blue line which showed up on the colour aerial shot, linking up with Listers Lane?

Mr MILLAR - Effectively. The blue line is actually the boundary line. The double black line just inside the blue line represents the walk track.

CHAIR - And then just links back up with Listers Lane and Golconda Road and back into Scottsdale.

Mr MILLAR - That's correct.

Mrs NAPIER - I am interested in this traffic count issue. We've had the closure of Simplot and there will be increased transport of potatoes basically through to the north-west coast. One of the submissions said 50 000 tonnes would be going through to Ulverstone, so that is a significant increase of traffic on one of these north-east roads. Then you have the decision, unfortunately, by North East Rail to close down so, as I understand it, that is an additional 70 000 to 80 000 tonnes a week. What can the department tell us about where that traffic is going, which roads they are using?

Ms McINTYRE - I'm not sure that we can tell you at the moment. It is early days in terms of the rail closure. We can certainly have those traffic counts undertaken to see if we can pick up the differences. I would imagine that if they are B-doubles they are travelling along the Bridport Main Road.

Mrs NAPIER - They wouldn't have any option.

Ms McINTYRE - With the smaller trucks, it is their choice as to how they travel.

Mrs NAPIER - Just following that up, we've had the closure of Simplot for some time now, so where is the traffic going? I am being told by people who are observing it that there is a significant increase in traffic on that Listers Lane section. Are we going to be looking at passing lanes and things like that at various stages on that road design?

Mr MILLAR - I would suggest in the near future you're not looking at passing lanes.

Ms McINTYRE - Not on this particular design.

Mrs NAPIER - I was thinking about the road itself. In terms of forward planning, does the department monitor the impact of these kinds of industry changes that occur in a region?

Ms McINTYRE - It does it at a strategic level and it is gathering that information at the moment.

Mr HALL - The other industry change of course is the closure of the Legerwood milk factory and with Bonlac now shifting all their milk through to Spreyton. Perhaps the general manager may be able to answer that at a later stage if he is aware which road the milk tankers are using.

Mrs NAPIER - They're B-doubles, though.

Mr HALL - Are they all B-doubles?

Mr MILLAR - The B-doubles have to use the Bridport Road. That is the only licensed B-double route out of this area.

Mrs NAPIER - Following up on that, in the middle of all this is also that Bridport-Scottsdale road. Are we seeing that increased tonnage going through the Lilydale-Golconda or is it putting increased pressure on a fairly limited Bridport-Scottsdale road. I know we are looking at just this project but I am trying to understand what the department's thinking is on where that future heavy traffic will go?

Ms McINTYRE - As I said earlier, the Bridport Main Road is the B-double route, so that is the designated freight route at the moment. We are very mindful of issues on the Bridport Main Road but it is really outside the scope of what we are here for today.

Mrs NAPIER - We are judging whether the design of this particular component - and this is for safety reasons, let alone anything else - needs to be looked at in the context of the forward plans for the north-east.

Mr MARTIN - I can touch on that, Mr Chairman? I will talk about all those things.

Mrs NAPIER - I will hold off those further questions then.

Mr BEST - With the strategic approach, does that fall back with the council or does that die? What bothers me is - and I don't doubt that there has been a lot of consultation and a fair amount of research and, as you say, we could map out a list of reports all the way from here to Launceston - that traffic and that sort of thing to me says, 'What is the strategic approach?' Whilst this is viewed as being the road to build upon, what is the strategy?

There is \$4.3 million for this - and I know we have to look at this project in isolation today - what is the big plan? I haven't heard it yet. I know you could say that is the next thing, but you're asking us as a committee to pass judgment on this allocation of money. Where to from here? What is the actual strategy?

CHAIR - Just before you answer, there is an allocation jointly between the Federal and State governments of \$20 million to address transport issues in the north-east region. My additional question is, 'How does all of that pin together?'.

Ms McINTYRE - The \$20 million allocation was specifically for the Lilydale-Golconda road. That road was declared a road of national importance. We have a set of projects for this round of funding. Part of that is the current project we are looking at today. We have another several kilometres through to Glen Moore Park that we are looking at as an extension of this project.

Mr BEST - To where?

Ms McINTYRE - Glen Moore Park, which is about 15 kilometres south.

We have a contract underway for replacement of several bridges - a design-and-construct contract. We have paid for traffic management through the Lilydale town. We have undertaken safety works through the roads, looked at speed zoning and safety barriers. We have installed safety barriers where they were required.

Mr MILLAR - Whilst the \$20 million was allocated to NETAS projects, the agreement with the Commonwealth was that \$2 million of the State contribution could be spent on either or both the Bridport Main Road and the Tasman Highway at Nunamara. A substantial part of the \$2 million is being used to upgrade the two kilometres of the missing six-kilometre section on the Tasman Highway at Nunamara.

Mr BEST - Getting back to your report, 2.1 Transport Economic Benefits, your cost-benefit ratio is 1.9. You have a description there for net present value, which says 'a direct measure of the net benefit difference between discounted total benefits, discounted projects' et cetera, that rating of 1.9, how does that -

Mr MILLAR - In my experience that is a reasonably good BCR to achieve.

Mr BEST - What does it actually mean?

Mr MILLAR - It's an indication of the cost of the benefits you will get out of doing the work compared with the costing of actually doing the work. There is a value, for instance, currently put on a fatality - I think it is in the order of about \$1 million - I don't have the accident statistics with me, but I think there has been at least one fatality on the section we're looking at. We take the position of, say, a fatality, there is \$1 million of improvements already. Similarly, there are values placed on personal injuries, property damages from accidents, the reduced distance that you travel, plus better speed environment as an indication of better fuel consumption - there are savings there. All those are put into an equation, compared with the actual total cost of the project, which is construction, any service relocations, costs of acquisition et cetera, as a ratio. Basically

it is saying that the benefit that can be achieved compared with the cost is approaching 2:1.

Mr BEST - I guess that also includes not just safety and those other matters that you mentioned, but the fact that you probably have more visitors under that sort of thing, or it is easier to do business in Scottsdale or the north-east and so on?

Mr MILLAR - Those sorts of things are factored into the calculations. I don't have the calculations with me, but they have certainly been done and can be made available to the committee, if you wish.

Mrs NAPIER - What is your scale? What is a bad rating and what is a very good rating?

Mr MILLAR - You can have a benefit cost ratio of zero if you like - in other words, the benefits you get are far less significant than the costs. That would give you a very low BCR. The greater the benefits compared with a cheaper cost will give you a higher BCR.

Mrs NAPIER - It's a really good 'Yes Minister' definition.

CHAIR - Mrs Napier, to help clarify all that Mr Millar touched on, the benefits are twice the costs.

Mr MILLAR - In a very simple way of putting it, yes.

Mr BEST - I have two other issues. It might be just because of the small section of road that the \$4.2 million is targeted to, but often we see something in relation to heritage studies. I don't know if that is significant or not, but I just raise it, and you might want to address it.

With this being listed as a tourism route at this stage - I am not that familiar with the road - what is the situation of pull-over areas, rest areas et cetera? Is it too short to be considered in that context?

Mr MILLAR - I would suggest that in relation to the section we are dealing with today I cannot really see from a tourist point of view why you would particularly want to pull over on that section of road.

Mr BEST - No, not there, I am saying in general.

Mr MILLAR - If there were a panoramic view, then in the design of that particular section we look at potential lay-bys for it. I just see no scope on this project we are looking at today.

Mr BEST - Mr Kettle is concerned about his cattle. You would not have seen these, but they have been sent to the committee. He is concerned about his ability to run cattle on his block of land near the Brid River.

Ms McINTYRE - That's not part of this particular project.

Mr BEST - This is one of the other ones that you talked about.

Mr MILLAR - As I mentioned earlier, when we finish this project it certainly doesn't preclude any other options further on.

May I just address the heritage point? I think you'll find that there is an indication in the report that in fact there are no heritage, fauna/flora issues, Aboriginal sites et cetera.

Mrs NAPIER - Just completing the rundown you gave us on the various projects that have been done as part of that \$20 million, do you have on hand what has been said on the bridges in the Lilydale section and the safety barriers?

Mr MILLAR - To date?

Mrs NAPIER - Yes.

Mr MILLAR - To date at Lilydale the streetscaping is \$270 000; the bridges, which have not been completed yet, we anticipate about \$1.3 million; the safety barriers, which we did last year, \$199 000.

Mrs NAPIER - So you wouldn't have costings yet on the Blumont Park?

Mr MILLAR - I suggest, if we take the \$4.3 million from the costing at the present moment - I must emphasise that it is just at the present moment - it would look at being as a project about \$10 million.

Mrs NAPIER - For the 15 kilometres?

Mr MILLAR - No, for the section from where we finish this particular project through to Blumont Park.

Mrs NAPIER - So that is not 15 kilometres?

Mr MILLAR - No, the 15 kilometres is the total distance from Blumont Park back to Scottsdale. I think the next section would be -

Ms McINTYRE - The total project from Blumont Park to Listers Lane is 9.5 kilometres.

Mrs NAPIER - Right. You mentioned a distance of 15 kilometres.

Ms McINTYRE - Fifteen kilometres is where it starts. As part of the project we lopped off about four kilometres of road - it meanders around.

Mrs NAPIER - So the next section, which goes from Blumont Park on -

Mr MILLAR - No, Blumont Park back to where we finish this particular section.

Mrs NAPIER - Do you have a costing for the next section?

Mr MILLAR - The next section on the Launceston side of Blumont Park?

Mrs NAPIER - Yes.

Mr MILLAR - That is not being considered at the present moment. Our considerations, if you like, have carried us as far as Blumont Park - from Bridport Main Road, down Listers Lane, onto Golconda Road through to Blumont Park.

Mrs NAPIER - In the context of this \$20 million, at this stage you don't have a guesstimate as to what the next section would cost?

Mr MILLAR - No.

Ms McINTYRE - I'm not sure what you mean. Do you mean part of this western approaches project - the total of this project?

Mrs NAPIER - No, not this project we are approving now.

Ms McINTYRE - This is stage 1 of a project that goes from Listers Lane through to Blumont Park. The next stage of that project is about \$10 million.

Mrs NAPIER - That's what I was trying to sort out.

Mr MILLAR - To Blumont Park. Beyond Blumont Park, let us say on the Launceston side of Blumont Park, we've not given any consideration.

Mrs NAPIER - So what we're saying is we're approving \$4.3 million for this particular section?

Mr MILLAR - That's right.

Mrs NAPIER - Okay. The next section we think will cost about \$10 million.

Mr MILLAR - That is correct.

Mrs NAPIER - That is what I was trying to confirm.

Mr MILLAR - We have yet to sort that out within the department.

Mrs NAPIER - I accept that and I accept that it's a guesstimate. It just helps us put into context the \$20 million that is going to be used, presumably, or we thought it would have been used by now. What is left out of the \$20 million and what will it buy? There is \$2 million going to other projects and that leaves us \$18 million. We have \$4 million or thereabouts for another section of road.

Mr MILLAR - No. I don't think your calculation is quite correct. I think you will find - I have a tabulation, which is my own personal tabulation - the projects we have run through today actually account for the full \$20 million. There has been \$500 000 in planning works -

Mrs NAPIER - Oh, I see. You haven't included the planning costs in that?

Mr MILLAR - No.

Mrs NAPIER - So how much has been spent on planning?

Mr MILLAR - Half a million, in round terms.

Mrs NAPIER - Not this \$500 000.

Mr MILLAR - No, it is in the total NETAS project, if you like - not specifically this section that we are looking at.

Mrs NAPIER - I must admit I had a figure of \$2 million, so you're saying it's not \$2 million?

Mr MILLAR - Well, in the past on all these other reports that has certainly not come out of the current \$20 million.

Mrs NAPIER - So what you're saying is that \$500 000 has been spent on the planning of this particular corridor?

Mr MILLAR - Yes.

Mrs NAPIER - On physically planning the road. But that doesn't include the \$500 000 that is in this particular project, as of page 8, for professional fees for design and contract -

Mr MILLAR - No, no. That figure there is not a planning figure; there are obviously design fees that we have to pay our consultants who have done the design for the section we are currently looking at today. When a contract is awarded we have people administering the contract and simplistically there is my time, Denise's time, departmental costs and so on - they are all rounded up in that particular \$500 000.

Mr BEST - You mentioned several other potential projects in relation to the roads you are looking at at the moment. The allocation of this money was seen as the priority, why is that? It is probably obvious.

Mr MILLAR - You are right in that there a substantial part of the \$20 million is going to what broadly we would term the western approach -

Mr BEST - What is the methodology then? Why has that been highlighted and not doing, say, seven kilometres to Blumont Park.

Mr McINTYRE - No, no. That is part of the -

Mr MILLAR - The western approach is at Scottsdale. If it is completed, as we would like to think it will be, it will take you from Bridport Main Road, through the piece we are looking at today and then beyond that, on a total new alignment, to Blumont Park. That is a substantial part of the \$20 million.

Mr BEST - But there are other areas that have been highlighted or you are considering, but they are viewed to be of less priority than this current -

Mr MILLAR - They are other areas that are in need of attention, which we have committed to - for instance, the bridge upgrade at the present moment. We started yesterday on the section at Nunamara. We have already done the street landscaping in Lilydale. We have already spent approaching \$200 000 on safety improvements last financial year on the section of the Lilydale Road from Rocherlea to Lilydale.

Mr BEST - Why is this project above the others that you might be thinking of doing later on?

Ms McINTYRE - This project, I believe, gave us best value for money when it was looked at. We had something like four rail crossings and the council also had issues through the dams area. In terms of better access to Scottsdale, preferably by using this road anyway, but by tidying up what is going on at the Scottsdale end, this project was considered to be the most logical to be the priority project.

Mr HALL - I would like refer back to the component costs. As the chairman very astutely pointed out to me a minute ago, the Hurst Creek Dam is almost 20 per cent of the actual capital cost of the whole project. As you state, the existing dam holds 7.5 megalitres and the proposed dam will hold approximately 23 megalitres. The application for dam approval is between, I think, the Bissett family and I presume the Water Management Branch of DPIWE. That can be a very convoluted process, so is your department giving the Bissett family any help in that regard?

Mr MILLAR - Not that I am aware of at this present point in time.

Mr HALL - So if they didn't get approval to store that extra capacity, the earthworks would be done and you would have that low-level water bypass there so that they can only retain 7.5 megalitres?

Mr MILLAR - That is correct at the present moment. I would point out that to reduce the volume of earthworks on the fill at the dam would mean increasing the grade that you're coming up at to attain the upper level of Listers Lane.

Mrs NAPIER - My maths must have missed something. We have \$4.3 million for the current project, \$1.3 million for the bridges, \$270 000 for Lilydale, close to \$200 000 for the safety barriers, \$500 000 for the planning, \$2 million for Nunamara-Scottsdale-Bridport. That totals \$18.6 million.

Mr MILLAR - You are quite right in that there, for instance, are the safety works - I have quoted the figure that we have spent to date on the safety works in the last financial year. The overall figure for total safety works over the period is \$500 000. If you'd like, in round figures I can run through them. As I previously indicated, planning to date we have spent about \$500 000; we actually spent just over \$100 000 on some survey work along Bridport Main Road.

Mrs NAPIER - In addition?

Mr MILLAR - Part of the \$20 million. I can run through this. For the total project these are the figures that make up the \$20 million: approximately \$500 000 on planning work; a little over \$100 000 on a survey on Bridport Main Road; approaching \$2 million at

Nunamara; \$300 000 for streetscape work at Lilydale; the bridges are costing about \$1.3 million; the western approach in total to Scottsdale is about \$14.3 million; \$500 000 on safety initiatives; and something over \$600 000 for departmental overheads from Federal funds. There is a spare \$500 000 floating, if you like, which we would like to use to do additional bridges.

CHAIR - That is \$20.1 million.

Mr MILLAR - I'm sorry that my rounding wasn't good enough.

Mrs NAPIER - And \$0.6 million for departmental overheads?

Mr MILLAR - Every year to cover the departmental costings on Federal projects there is money taken out of the largest federally-funded project on the program. Last financial year NETAS had the biggest Federal component. It is a bit like the \$500 000 that is shown here on this estimate.

Mrs NAPIER - Would they similarly take a percentage out of the north-west coast national highway and things like that?

Mr MILLAR - No. Because last year there was not a lot of big national federally-funded projects - for instance, this year I would suggest that probably with the Ulverstone-Penguin duplication up and running, a substantial part of these overheads would be taken out of that funding.

Mrs NAPIER - Is that taken out of only the roads that are federally funded?

Mr MILLAR - As in the roads being State funded, there is a similar overhead component.

Mrs NAPIER - So \$0.6 million could be attributed to the Federal contribution and \$0.6 million could be attributed to the State, so that the \$1.2 million departmental overheads with that project.

Mr MILLAR - No. Within the total departmental program of Federal works there is about \$0.6 million last financial year of overheads and it was taken out of this project. As I said, this was the largest -

Mrs NAPIER - So it would be \$300 000 each, presumably.

Mr MILLAR - No. Somewhere within the program we have to cover our federally-funded overheads, so the practice is to take the majority of that out of the biggest Federal allocation for that particular financial year. As I said, last year most of the Federal projects were of a smallish nature and it happened to be that this one had the biggest funding of the Federal Government for that financial year.

Mrs NAPIER - I have a feeling the people of the north-east wouldn't agree with that.

Mr MILLAR - Okay. As I have suggested, it will be probably be coming out of the Ulverstone-Penguin and the people in the north-west probably don't agree with that particular one either.

Mrs NAPIER - I do appreciate you working that out because I think everyone wondered where the \$20 million was and now we know. It gives us an idea of what is allocated. In terms of forward planning, because we are looking at this development in the context of the full project, and in the end if more trucks are going to use it and use it as the fastest route and so on, I guess we would estimate in a time frame when they can start safely using it and getting best benefit out of it.

CHAIR - Can I come back to a matter about the Bissetts, the dam and the substantial amount of fill. Mr Bissett has made a comment in his submission to us that he is concerned about the loss of irrigation capacity because of the impact of the fill on the dam and, looking at that, the toe of the batter cuts into about half of that major dam of his. He is concerned about the impact on his 2005 cropping program. Can you make any comment about your construction program, which might then impact upon Mr Bissett's irrigation opportunities and his cropping program for 2005?

Mr MILLAR - My understanding from the discussions held with Mr Bissett is that we will not disadvantage him as far as irrigation potential for that cropping season is concerned. I understand that he is looking at an alternative irrigation arrangement.

CHAIR - Okay. We will hear more from Mr Bissett later. Mr Millar and Ms McIntyre, thank you very much for your evidence.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.

CHAIR (Mr Harriss) - We now welcome Mr Martin to our hearing. Mr Martin, we have your written submission, so if you would like to speak to that. Thank you very much for being here.

Mr MARTIN - I think that is probably worthwhile, in view of the discussion that has just taken place - and I am sorry I don't have a bigger map. I will go and get some bigger maps later to explain a lot of the confusion that seems to be around about this project and a few other things.

I will take a step back - and it's referred to in council's submission - there are three main strategic road routes into the north-east. One is down to Bridport, across the top to George Town and down the East Tamar Highway; the second is the Lilydale-Golconda; and the third is the Tasman Highway. Part of council's submission is that we have referred to reports that have been done on some or all of these routes over the last 17 to 20 years. Every single one of them - and I will make available a copy of the council's submission to the public after this has finished, with the committee's approval - refers to the upgrading of the Lilydale-Golconda main road as the main strategic road route into the north-east. Without going into a lot of detail about the reasons why and why not, there is a lot of engineering, economic and social analysis, what the route will affect in terms of going into Launceston or Scottsdale - travelling times, cost factors and all those sorts of things.

But where council originally came from was that the north-east, or anywhere in the State for that matter, cannot afford to have three strategic main road routes into one region. We have to have one strategic road route into the north-east. We cannot afford, as a State, to have freight routes all over the place. So what we have been pushing for for probably the last eight or 10 years - a lot more than we have before that - is to say, 'Which route are we going to recommend and why?'. That is a result of some of the studies that have been done, particularly in recent times. When you look at a map you will see that going down to Bridport, across the top and down to Launceston and then on down to Hobart, up the north-west coast or wherever freight transport has to go, it is a pretty long way. Going over The Sideling or down through Lilydale, there is probably not much difference. So further analysis was done on those particular routes. There have been traffic counts done; there have been economic analyses and benefit cost ratios done. In those reports that I have referred to there is a lot of that data. The last report that was done - the NETAS - all that information is in there. There has been a freight demand analysis done of where freight is travelling to and why and the economic benefits and those types of things. That was done by the department - a freight demand survey - last October or November, I think. If you have a copy of that, you would be surprised at just how much freight traffic is coming into and out of the north-east of Tasmania.

There is a real imperative from council's perspective on behalf of their community and for the future of their community that we get this right and we get it undertaken as quickly as possible. There has been a lot of procrastination over the last 30 or 40 years about which route. In fact, the council and the community in the north-east could never decide, so it was a pretty easy decision by successive governments over many years to say, 'Oh well, they can't decide. We won't do anything', or, 'We'll just do a little bit here and a little bit there'. That is where we are coming from. We think there is a lot of

potential in the north-east to improve our existing forestry and agricultural industries in particular, but apart from that there is our growing tourism industry. That is why we see it as a real imperative to get this route right and upgraded to a category 2 road. We think there have been enough analyses and reports done. We have information coming out of our ears in terms of why it should be the Lilydale-Golconda main road route. Our submission covers that, I think, reasonably adequately.

Our submission refers to eight of those studies - and I will not regurgitate what you have already read. I think it covers most of those types of things that I spoke about. They all recommend the upgrading of the Lilydale-Golconda main road. There has been a view that there might need to be another study done, or there should be further work done, or there should be further traffic counts. Council thinks there has already been enough of that sort of stuff done. The last study cost us over \$400 000 and that is a lot of money in anyone's terms. We think that to do any more studies on whether The Sideling or the Lilydale-Golconda main road should be used is an absolute waste of money. Therefore, that is council's decision in terms of recommending that the projects that have been identified need to start as soon as possible. We have already had one major industry leave in the last couple of years and one of the reasons, I would suggest, is the cost of transport. B-doubles have to go the long way round wherever they go in this State, whether it is the north-west or down to Hobart or to Bell Bay or wherever. We see that this is the most strategic route, apart from the economic and engineering analyses that have already been done, to carry forward and improve the economic and social fundamentals of the north-east into the future.

I think it is also worthwhile to touch on the social fundamentals because at the moment the three routes have major problems in terms of safety for the ordinary travelling public, so the sooner we do something that improves the safety aspects for our elderly and our schoolchildren travelling between here and Launceston, the better. At the moment they are competing on every single route on inadequate widths and dangerous curves and those types of things with the heavy vehicles we have in the north-east and we are always going to have because of the types of industries here. We see that continued reviews are only hindering existing and future industries and economic and social development for the north-east.

Letters have been sent to politicians. Mrs Napier is aware, as are other politicians who are here, of what we have said so I don't need to go over that any further. We see that this project is linked to all that information we have provided and it needs to start as soon as possible. I am not qualified to talk about the engineering aspects; I think you have already covered most of those adequately. The other thing is the consultations with the affected landowners and those types of things. I think that needs to occur between DIER officers, because this will become a State road. The main thing that council is concerned about at the end of the day is that if there is any loss of agricultural economy or land, the landowners themselves are adequately compensated. Or, if there is an ability to assist to improve their operations, that is taken into account as well.

With my experience - and I have been involved with this for a long time - I don't think that any of the questions that have been asked today should unduly delay this. We have heard them all before and I think they have already been answered before in reports. It is unfortunate as well that officers change from time to time within the department, so Denise and Greg haven't been involved with this project over the last eight or nine years,

as I have been. Some of the difficulties that they encountered in answering some of the questions were because of that factor.

Mr BEST - Thank you very much, that is what I have been wanting to hear all day. You have made it very clear, as far as I am concerned. As a committee, it is our role to make sure that we allocate the money appropriately. I appreciate your explanation of where you are at.

Mr HALL - In regard to Mr Martin, I think he mentioned that it is your road at the moment. When do you expect a handover to the State?

Mr MARTIN - The sooner the better.

Laughter.

Mrs NAPIER - What is the final agreement about the handover?

Mr MARTIN - In our partnership agreement with the State, one of the items is to discuss the handover requirements or the swapping of roads and those details are yet to be worked out. One other comment I might make, Mr Chairman, is that in terms of the \$20 million obviously there will be a lot more needed to upgrade this road to an adequate category 2 highway so it can take B-double access. It is probably in the order of \$60 million or \$70 million or something like that, but \$20 million is a good start. We will be looking for further assistance because you can't just do a section of the road and put B-doubles on it.

Mr HALL - Just in relation to that and the matter I raised earlier in regard to the transport of milk out of the north-east, what is happening there? I think Mrs Napier said it was going onto B-doubles at the moment on the Bridport Road. Is that the case?

Mr MARTIN - Yes, any B-doubles have to go down the Bridport Road.

Mr HALL - But there are other tankers going as well, are there - triaxle tankers that are carting milk out as well to the north-west?

Mr MARTIN - Yes.

Mr HALL - And they're going on the Lilydale Road?

Mr MARTIN - Anything that is of a B-double nature will go the other way. I think most are B-doubles when they take the milk out of here, so they have to go that way. But, again, that is a cost to our dairy industry.

Mrs NAPIER - I guess the only question is how soon you would like to see the completion of the upgrade of this road so that heavier traffic could use the route?

Mr MARTIN - I think it's in the interest of everyone who lives in the north-east that we get a decent category 2 highway as quickly as possible. I would like it done tomorrow, I think council would like it done tomorrow and I think the whole north-east community would like it done tomorrow, but realistically I think we are looking at a time frame of,

unfortunately, up to 10 years. If we can expedite it as quickly as possible, I think that would be in everyone's interest. It was interesting to listen to the conversation in relation to the economic benefit cost ratios and things like that. That is on the existing route. We think that once you upgrade it to category 2 highway standard the benefit cost ratios would be something more towards three.

CHAIR - Thank you for coming along, Mr Martin.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW.

Mr LESLIE BISSETT WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - Thank you, Mr Bissett. Just give your evidence however you feel comfortable.

Mr BISSETT - My submission is very similar to what you have probably already looked at, but I have done a Powerpoint presentation to perhaps explain the situation in a little more detail. I will go through that and there are a few things I would like to add to it as we go through.

Firstly, on behalf of Fred and Graham, my father and brother on the other side of the room, who trade together with me as Listers Lane Pty Ltd, I would like to thank you all for this opportunity to present this submission. We have major concerns with this route that is proposed through Lilydale and feel that it is not the best route to service and meet the needs of the Scottsdale community. The process used to decide on this route was flawed right from the start, as Dorset Council staff and members were not interested in any other option. One of the original members of the first steering committee has told us that they pulled out of the committee because of the tunnel vision and lack of interest in looking at other routes on the part of council staff.

This particular route has been claimed as a trucking route but, as I picked up today and also in negotiations with various people over time, it was a trucking route; it changes to a tourist route; it goes back to a trucking route - it seems to depend on who you are talking to on the particular day as to what traffic will use this route. We know the trucking industry is against this route. Lilydale Road is very unsuitable for trucks as there are so many hills and valleys that constantly need negotiating. We also understand that Launceston City Council does not favour this route as the truck traffic using this road will have to pass through the centre of Launceston city.

We feel that there has been no avenue of protest available to anyone who is affected by this route, as we were promised by DIER, even though we have worked with DIER and we appreciate the work done by Denise and the different staff we have worked with. We had been led to believe that there would be a chance to protest about this road right through the whole process. Basically we have tried to do so, but we have got nowhere because there has not been any avenue. We feel that Scottsdale council and DIER management are bulldozing this route through without any consideration of the practicalities for those affected by the road.

One thing we have noticed is that there has not been one Scottsdale councillor come to us and talk to us. We have been to one or two and, yes, they have showed minimal interest, but we feel that as far as Scottsdale council is concerned, our concerns have been totally wiped. It got back to us that at one stage our mayor said to those people who are going to be affected, 'Well, this is \$10 million'. We think that is a very poor comment.

We do agree that there is a need for a new approach to Scottsdale. However, we are still very strongly opposed to this route being chosen when we consider that there are other

routes that could be investigated and used for this approach. Our major objections to this route are for the following reasons:

- the taking of prime agricultural land
 - the effect this route will have on our farming operation
 - the effect this route will have on other farming operations within the Dorset municipality; and
 - the effect on the intersection with Bridport Road and George Street and on those living in that area.
 -
- Let me deal with each matter in more detail.

First, the taking of prime agricultural land. As prime agricultural land is very limited within the Dorset municipality, and in Tasmania in general, we feel that it is quite absurd to take away more of this valuable resource to be put under road construction and thus be lost forever for its original purpose. We feel we have a responsibility to future generations to preserve this irreplaceable resource and the land along each side of Listers Lane, even though it is ours, is among some of the best agricultural land available in this area. We feel that the whole environmental debate is so unbalanced. We believe that prime agricultural land is just as big a threatened species as many of the endangered animals and trees. At least the animals and trees may have the opportunity to be reproduced, but not so with prime agricultural land - once it is used it is gone forever.

Secondly, the effect on our farming operation. This new western approach to Scottsdale will affect our farming operation immensely. We own and operate one of the larger farming operations in Scottsdale, with land on both sides of the new approach and this new highway will split our operation in two. *[Slide]* This is a map of our farming operation: the blue lines are our farming boundaries. Listers Lane is the red line that runs through the centre. On the northern side of the highway we farm some 173 acres, being the full length of Listers Lane, except for a small area that is owned by David and Vivienne Clough. On the southern side we operate about two-thirds of the length of Listers Lane and this amounts to a further 117 acres. This is a total of 290 acres on both sides of the road, and we feel that a new highway through the middle of this farming operation would drastically reduce the value of our property. If we chose to sell the operation in the future, would adequate compensation be paid to compensate for such a loss? The green lines on the map are our paddocks.

Our major concerns with this route are that we will need continued access for our stock and farm machinery to be able to cross Listers Lane at any time. As our farming operation is facing both sides of the road, it is a long, narrow holding and the farm does not lend itself to internal laneways. The simplest, most effective way to move both cattle and sheep is across the road and through the gates into each paddock. We have some 19 gates and entrances strategically placed along to route to minimise the time spent on the road and to make this operation as quick and safe as possible. DIER have told us at this stage they will allow us to keep these accesses, but our concern is, with this being a major highway, will this change in the future?

Mention was made this morning of underpasses. As we have talked with DIER we have been told that underpasses are not a solution in this particular area because of the lie of the ground. If underpasses were to be used, DIER would have to take more of our agricultural land and make laneways along each side of the road, and then try to make an underpass under a road which is basically level at present.

The farm machinery access is another concern. The operation includes the production of beans, carrots, onions, poppies and potatoes, and these gates and entrances are needed to facilitate the quick and easy movement of tractors, trucks, large farm machinery and harvesters into these production areas. *[Slide]* The yellow dots on the map there show where all our gates are along each side of the road, and when we are moving stock from one paddock to another, we use the shortest route possible. We have put those gates basically in every corner of the paddock on the road so that there is more or less a diagonal movement from one paddock to the next.

How long will DIER allow us to continue to use these gates and entrances, especially when it is inevitable that red mud will get on the highway? At present we do our best to keep dirt off the highway but, as everyone knows, it is almost impossible at times to keep that red mud off the highways. We are worried that as soon as we get a situation with mud on the highway, DIER will be on our backs.

[Slide] This is the irrigation situation. The map here shows our present dams - the five orange rectangles, and the dotted line that comes from the second dam is the underground irrigation main that is also in situ at the moment. The gates also allow us access to the irrigation machinery, to the dams that serve our cropping operation. With the present design, we will have one dam replaced and we are working with the designers of the road for the new road to become the new dam wall. Will the necessary dam approvals be easy to obtain? These can take anything up to two years. We have had a dam approval in to have this particular dam enlarged for two years now, but because of the road situation that approval has not gone through. Rivers and Water Supply won't do anything with it until they know what is happening with the road. They also have concerns about ownership of the dam - whether we own the dam or DIER owns the dam. Also the applications - who has to put them in? DIER said this morning it was our responsibility; Rivers and Water Supply tell us it is DIER's responsibility. So that is a major problem that we feel needs sorting out.

The underground main that services two parts of our operation will be replaced, but our major concern is having enough water to carry out our 2005 irrigation season on the southern side of Listers Lane and having the work completed in time so that it doesn't affect our 2005 poppy program. The overall problem of irrigation water on a highway will also have to be dealt with.

Another point to our farming operation is the situation where David and Vivienne Clough live on the bottom of the arrow *[Slide]* and where the little dots go there is to be a loop road, which comes off the new highway back onto Listers Lane. Our concern is that this is another slice of productive land being taken out of the area.

The continued access to the West Minstone Road is another concern of ours as far as our farming operation is concerned. We have a further property over on the Tasman Highway which is the hexagon at the bottom *[Slide]* and if this new approach is put in

place we will lose access to West Minstone Road, meaning that we will have take all our farm machinery and harvesters through the township of Scottsdale thus creating dangerous situations there. We also have a contract potato seed cutting operation on Listers Lane and all the potatoes are sourced from Jondi Cool Store, which is also marked there and which is on East Minstone Road. We cart some 1 000 tonnes of potatoes on this route along West Minstone Road and Listers Lane, and if access is denied, that will also have to come right through Scottsdale.

Our third concern is the effect that this route will have on other farming operations within the Dorset municipality. Listers Lane and West Minstone Road are also used by quite a number of farmers as an important bypass to Scottsdale. These farmers also use these roads to take their farm machinery and harvesters from Jetsonville to Springfield and beyond so that they do not have to go through Scottsdale. I estimate that there would be some 20 farmers and contractors who would use this route constantly. You might go there today and see no-one use it, but it is one of those things - it is an occasional use, but overall the number of times it is used throughout the year would be a lot. We wonder what route Dorset Council would like these farmers to use once this highway is constructed. Perhaps Coplestone Street past the high school; perhaps Ellenor Street past the council offices; or the only other choice, down King Street through the business centre.

Our fourth concern is the intersection with Bridport Road and George Street. This intersection will become much more congested even though DIER are planning quite a few changes. It will also be possibly dangerous, as people will have to choose at the bottom of the hill whether their proposed route will be Launceston or Bridport. I have been pushed down that hill in a tractor by log trucks, and I know what sort of an experience it is, trying to get off that road as a log truck wants to go down Bridport Road. Believe me, it is not very nice. I also understand that DIER are restricting the people in the house on the corner and those in some of the other houses down that side of the road, and not allowing them to have any cars parked outside their houses. That creates another issue there as to parking for those residents. Also, there is the issue of those residents having to back out onto a slip lane with traffic coming down the road. So there is a safety issue there too.

The intersection will also be noisy for residents in the area as the heavy trucks use their exhaust brakes to slow down to negotiate the intersection, and then accelerate as they leave it.

Dorset Council and DIER are pushing this route for the reason that Listers Lane has already been constructed as a heavy vehicle route. As I mentioned earlier, its use - heavy vehicle route/tourist route - keeps changing. We feel a study should be done on the use of Listers Lane because very few trucks are using it, choosing instead to use the present Bridport Road so that they can access Flinders Highway between Bridport and Bell Bay. When you talk to many of the truck drivers, their comment is, 'We won't use a new highway because the present route is the most appropriate; it is flat and we don't have to change our gears. We would much rather travel the Flinders Highway because it is a much more economical route to use than the Lilydale Road.' The use of these roads will increase when Simplot start transporting their 50 000 tonnes of potatoes to Ulverstone and the drivers prefer to use the Flinders Highway to reach their destination.

In February while working a paddock on the corner of both these routes, I counted three trucks in five hours used Listers Lane, whereas in one hour 15 different trucks, semi-trailers and B-doubles used Bridport Road. The climb on Campbells Hill on Bridport Road is another reason why the council has discounted this route, but 95 per cent of all truck traffic today is using Bridport Road and Campbells Hill has proved no barrier to their movement.

We don't want to get into the debate as to whether Lilydale Road or The Sideling should be the preferred route for this new highway. However, as we understand that Lilydale Road is the chosen route, we would request that Scottsdale A option be revisited as this seems to be a much more effective route into Scottsdale. We understand that the Dorset Council discounted this route because it adds a little further distance into Scottsdale than the present chosen route. Many, including council, are calling for the upgrading of Bridport Main Road - and I understand that if the Howard Government is re-elected, there have already been funds allocated to some work to be done on Bridport Road - and this will probably be done in the near future, so why not use Scottsdale A to bring a new route through to this area and make the connection where there is plenty of room on non-agricultural land. As Bridport is fast becoming a satellite town of Scottsdale, this junction would enable common use by both towns for access into Launceston.

We feel that the Scottsdale A option would also be an answer to many of the problems that are already addressed. There is no prime agricultural land to be acquired for this route, as it is all crown land. It would not need any of the large excavation work and the railway stabilisation work that needs to be done on Listers Lane. It would not affect our farming operations in any way. The loss of the dam, its reconstruction and the concerns for the 2005 season would be eliminated. The important access route along Listers Lane and West Minstone Road for ourselves and other farmers would be maintained, thus eliminating the need for harvesters and farm equipment to be taken through Scottsdale streets, thus making the town safer. The intersection with Bridport Road where Scottsdale A would join on could be made much safer with roundabouts, loop entrances on and off the Bridport Road and not having any problems with residents. The noise problems for residents would also be fixed because the traffic would just go straight through and it would be a lot different from what it is today.

We feel that it would be a smoother, much straighter and much safer route into Scottsdale. We feel that if this route were chosen, the money would be spent more effectively. Leigh Barrett, who designed the road, told us that at this stage he has spent over \$1 million on this piece around our dam - a 400-500-metre section. We feel that the money could be spent much more effectively on a new route.

DIER made the comment this morning that Scottsdale A was dismissed because it was a cost of \$8.5 million. I make that a saving of nearly \$5 million by using Scottsdale A. That is the only way that I read it this morning. Yes, Scottsdale A will take the road a little bit out of Scottsdale. They mentioned that it was 13.9 kilometres long, but I cannot understand that because when you look from Blumont Park through to the area where it would come, you can see that it is not that far, so it must be an optical illusion

Also if this particular part of the road is approved, the land and the environmental issues of the next section which you guys will shortly have to face would be also discounted. They would be addressed because the road wouldn't be coming into the area where

Mr Kettle and the Turner family are being affected, again with agricultural land being used.

Thank you for allowing us to present this submission to you. We hope that we have made our objectives clear and trust that these considerations will be taken into account when making your decision on this new proposed western approach to Scottsdale. If you have any further questions or if any clarifications are needed, please feel free to address them to any us because we desire to work with you in the development of this very important project. But our main concern is: please leave Listers Lane alone.

Mr BEST - That was an interesting presentation, by the way. Where road A comes on to the Bridport Road, do you know roughly how far away from Scottsdale that would be? Is it somewhere near the rubbish dump?

Mr BISSETT - Six kilometres - or it maybe it is about 4.5 kilometres.

Mr BEST - So it is not far from Scottsdale?

Mr BISSETT - No.

Mr BEST - And it is probably some way away from the mud flat winding part of that road.

Mr BISSETT - It is before that, Brenton. As you leave Scottsdale you go up over the three hills and then down into Jetsonville and Scottsdale A was to come in just basically where you hit the scrub as you go towards Bridport. It comes in that area there somewhere. Oak Dene Road was looked at originally, but there are residences there which created a large problem. This particular area, where Lauderdale Road comes out, would be the next suggestion as far where it could come.

Mr BEST - How do you know that the farmers in the area where A would go - obviously it would have an impact from what you have said - are not as intensive as you are?

Mr BISSETT - That particular area is not used for intensive agricultural farming; it is more stock in that way. There are no vegetables growing in that area. It is farming land used for stock but it is basically grazed soil and not suitable for cropping.

CHAIR - Can I just interrupt you. If Glen wants to come and help with the presentation he is welcome to come to the podium. We will get him to make the declaration and if Mr Bissett wants you to assist him that is fine.

Mr BISSETT - If he can give me a little bit more information that is fine.

Mr GLEN MOORE WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

Mr MOORE - There is one really good part through there - one really nice cropping farm with a lot of high-grade red soil on it, as I read this.

Mr BISSETT - I understand from reading the map it doesn't actually touch any of those farms but I know there is a farm in that area but there again where it is designed to go through is -

Mr BEST - Less impact is what you are working for.

Mr BISSETT - Yes.

Mr BEST - The savings aspect: can you explain that to me, please?

Mr BISSETT - Based on the figures that DIER have given here this morning they are telling us that they are going to spend \$4.3 million on the road from Bridport Road through to Oak Dene Road on the sections we are working on at the moment. The next section from Oak Dene Road through to Blumont Park, where both highways are going to meet up - whichever option it is starting off from - they claim will look like costing \$10 million. I make that \$14.3 million. Their admission to Scottsdale A is discounted at \$8.5 million.

Mr HALL - Just as a matter of clarification, Mr Chairman, could I just ask Mr Bissett if he could mark on the guideline map approximately where Scottsdale A is, please.

Mr BISSETT - I don't know if it is appropriate to do that. If I make a mark on this and it is in the wrong place -

Laughter.

Mr MARTIN - I will get a copy of that other one and give to you, if you like.

Mr BISSETT - Okay. I have got a copy of that one. I tried yesterday to get a photocopy of it for the presentation but the colour photocopier in Scottsdale was out.

Mr HALL - If I could follow on, Mr Chairman - and I did ask a question this morning of the representative of DIER and they were unable to give an answer - have you any idea of the quantum or the amount of good prime land that you will lose through this exercise? Have you worked it out in terms of area?

Mr BISSETT - No, we haven't worked it out but they have given an estimate - or Leigh Barrett gave us an estimate the other day that he thinks it is somewhere in the vicinity of four to six acres. But until the design is actually finished and set out no-one really knows exactly what.

Mr HALL - You talked about if you wanted to sell the property in the future: have you worked out in your own mind the question of the percentage of devaluation that this road would cause your property if you were to sell it down the track?

Mr BISSETT - No, we haven't worked anything out like that.

Mr HALL - Do you think it might be significant?

Mr BISSETT - We think it would be significant. The fact that the operation is split would make it quite significant, I would think. Yes, we probably have got the option of selling one side of the road and then the other, but we don't know the future and at this stage we have no plans for selling. It has never been discussed.

Mr HALL - I understand that. Could you just clarify a point for me? I asked a question this morning about the access - and I think Mrs Napier did too - about a stock underpass and you were saying just a while ago that physically it was difficult because you would have internal laneways feeding into the underpass which would therefore take up more prime land.

Mr BISSETT - That was one of the reasons why I think DIER has come to the decision that they will leave the gates where they are. The end where the major work of Listers Lane is going to be done, the cutting is too far down to get an underpass anyway and back up on that piece that they are not touching at the present stage it is level so it means they have to still get down under the road to take land out each side of the road to be able to make an underpass.

Mrs NAPIER - Could I just follow up the issue of an underpass? It is my understanding that there was going to be an underpass but it is too near the dam.

Mr BISSETT - Where the new dam is to be built the spillway is to become a stock underpass at the same time and I understand it is big enough to be able to drive a tractor through as well. So it is a dam spillway, the underpass that they are working on.

Mrs NAPIER - In talking with the departmental representatives, they said they were having discussions with you about an option of providing access through your property of a lane to the west end side. Do you see that as an option?

Mr BISSETT - We feel it is an option, Sue, but there again where does it go? The only place where we feel it could come it is going to run into the railway line without a lot of difficulty. We are not so much concerned about ourselves - yes, it is going to affect us - but we are more concerned about the other farmers who use that road as a bypass and the fact that machinery is going to have to come through Scottsdale. We can put a road through to get ourselves through or DIER will put a road through us, as they have offered, but it still doesn't get over the situation of other farmers using that road for their machinery.

Mrs NAPIER - In relation to the loss of the four to six acres, what is the value of an acre of land up here in your property area?

Mr BISSETT - I don't really know, to be honest, at the moment. We purchased one of the properties two years ago and paid just on \$4 000 an acre but that was before the real estate boom hit Tasmania and I don't really know how that has affected agricultural land. I wouldn't like to put an estimate on it. I'm not qualified to give an estimate, I don't think.

Mrs NAPIER - Coming back to some of your earlier comments made about the time at which the loop was chosen, I guess it is fair to say that this committee is looking at how you would construct a road on the route that has been chosen. What can you do to try to get people to take into account those issues earlier about the preference for -

Mr BISSETT - Well, we haven't done anything, Sue, in this situation. We had no idea there was even a new road coming into Scottsdale. We didn't know anything about the studies and the NETAS study and things like that that were done here. The first that we knew of the fact that a new road was coming into Scottsdale was when John Martin rang me one day about two years ago. He said, 'There's a new western approach coming into Scottsdale. It's coming across your land. Perhaps you might like to come in and have a look'. That was the first that we knew anything of it and since then we have worked with DIER. We didn't realise there were other options up until about 12 months ago but from then on we started working with DIER. They moved the road from the big loop that they were putting through our farm to where it is now at our request, but we didn't become aware of the other options until we started to get the literature from DIER, which would be 12 months ago. With Scottsdale A, we didn't even realise it was there until we really got round to looking at it.

Mr BEST - We have heard a bit about the strategy of having a main road from Launceston to the north-east et cetera, what would you say about the strategy from that point of view, or you are just questioning the access onto Bridport Road?

Mr BISSETT - We definitely see the need for a new road into Scottsdale, Brenton. There is no question about that - we definitely need it. But we feel this is more the issue of coming through Listers Lane in this particular area when we feel that Scottsdale A gets completely away from agricultural land and that sort of thing and doesn't make major alterations to the route. It will still come into Scottsdale in the same way, but it will perhaps be even straighter into Scottsdale in that it would not have to come to the corner of Listers Lane and wait and then go up the hill again.

Mr HALL - Mr Bissett, going back to the dam again, I think you mentioned that you already had an application in to perhaps increase the wall height obviously to get more volume in that particular dam

Mr BISSETT - That was before -

Mr HALL - What were the indications you were getting from the Water Management Branch at that stage?

Mr BISSETT - We actually put in two applications. We wanted to enlarge two of our dams and they asked which one we wanted to do first and they put the applications in and we had to go through all the environmental studies and all those sorts of things. We did get approval for the first one to be done at the end of April this year -

Mr HALL - Is that the top dam?

Mr BISSETT - No, it was our bottom dam which we enlarged in May, but they told us that once they got that one through they would then look at the other one. The road issue had come up in between and basically they do not want to do anything until they know what is happening with the road in that way.

Mr HALL - And you think it is a question about who actually owns the dam wall?

Mr BISSETT - Well, Rivers and Water Supply have put that to us as to who owns the dam wall, who owns the dam and all those sorts of questions because the road is DIER's and the dam is going to be under DIER's roads -

Mr HALL - Yes, I know the complexity there.

Mrs NAPIER - Have you got that in writing from the Rivers and Water Supply?

Mr BISSETT - No, it has only been through Julian Johnstone as we have talked to him.

Mrs NAPIER - And you have also said that you have been told by DIER that you should put the application in for the dam but there is an argument to say that DIER should be putting the application in.

Mr BISSETT - Yes.

Mrs NAPIER - Is that through verbal discussions or is it in writing?

Mr BISSETT - No, that is in verbal discussions with Julian. We have signed a form that Leigh Barrett gave us to allow an application to be put in but I don't know whether that has gone through. Leigh has actually been in touch with Pitt and Sherry but I don't know how far that has gone or what the situation is there either.

Mr HALL - And Julian Johnstone is?

Mr BISSETT - He is the Rivers and Water Supply Commission's representative for our area.

CHAIR - Just on the matter of property ownership - and I am looking at one of the department's aerial photographs - the proposed property boundary once the road is built shows half-way down the batter from the fill. If that is your property boundary and that becomes a dam wall, surely there could be no dispute as to ownership of the dam. If that is your property boundary and anything to the left-hand side of that belongs to DIER then anything on the right-hand side, including the dam, is yours.

Mr BISSETT - I don't think it is an actual dispute over who owns the dam, I think it is more over who owns the dam wall. I think that the dam will be on our property but the dam wall will be on DIER's property. It is not so much of the ownership of the dam but it is the workings of the whole situation. Denise maybe able to help you.

CHAIR - Come forward, Denise.

Ms McINTYRE - I was just going to make a general comment. Any actual structure that is part of the road, which in this case the dam wall would be, would be DIER's responsibility. I think the question of ownership is really a matter that has come up as a result of the application for the actual dam, or increasing the dam's volume, and I am sure that those issues can be resolved between the department and the people concerned. I believe that there are two types of applications going on at the moment: there is the preparation for development application to allow the roadworks to proceed, which includes the construction of the dam wall; and there is also the licence to increase the volume of the farm water contained within the dam.

Mr BISSETT - I think the licence is our side of it but I think the actual application - the letter we signed for Leigh Barrett was to allow DIER to apply for the building of a dam, I think it was.

CHAIR - Any questions?

Mrs NAPIER - No, I think my questions would come back to the department as to what their response is to the issues raised in relation to A.

CHAIR - One matter I would like to raise from your presentation: you mentioned that the Launceston City Council doesn't favour this proposal if it will impact on traffic through the centre of Launceston, but Scottsdale A has the same impact on traffic through Launceston, does it not?

Mr BISSETT - I would understand it would, yes. That is why we have said we don't want to get into the debate as to whether The Sideling route or Lilydale Road is the preferred route because I feel that is probably the council's decision. We are more concerned about this end of the highway. What we have noted is that it would seem to appear that DIER's and the council's strategy is to get a section organised and through and then basically, bang, that section is done so the next section has to be done. That doesn't give other people an option in that way.

CHAIR - To clear my mind, all of these studies which have been undertaken in the past, to which Mr Martin referred, suggest that Golconda Road be used and your suggestion that Scottsdale A be revisited doesn't in any way go against those studies, does it?

Mr BISSETT - No.

CHAIR - Because you are still linking up with Golconda Road so you are still fulfilling those objectives which have been identified through numerous studies as to the desired route back into Launceston.

Mr BISSETT - That is why I said we are not into The Sideling-Lilydale Road argument because we understand that the Lilydale Road-Golconda Road is the chosen route but we feel that Scottsdale A is just that better option to bring it through.

CHAIR - I hear, and also recall from reading in your submission, your real concerns about crossing the highway with this road becoming State responsibility rather than in council

ownership in the future. You would expect something fairly formal, wouldn't you, about your opportunity, if not right, to continue to cross the highway once it is reconstructed?

Mr BISSETT - I think we would have to some written formal agreement that we were able to continue to operate in the way that we are and in the way that DIER are going to allow us to because, as they have said, if we end up putting mud or irrigation water on the road, what a Pandora's box that is going to open in future years.

CHAIR - Thank you very much for your presentation and we do appreciate your time.

Mr MARTIN - Mr Chairman, is it appropriate I make a few comments on a couple of issues?

CHAIR - It is really up to the committee for us to raise further concerns that we might have because we cannot get into the situation, Mr Martin, of you asking other witnesses questions.

Mr MARTIN - I'm not going to be asking questions.

CHAIR - Likewise we will probably get DIER people back before us so we can ask them questions following Mr Bissett's presentation.

Mrs NAPIER - Perhaps we can hear from Mr Moore and then John might be able to provide some information as it might be a similar issue.

Mr MARTIN - Well, do I get an opportunity to provide some additional information to you afterwards?

CHAIR - If it is a continuation of your submission then the committee is certainly able to take it on board.

Mr MARTIN - Okay.

CHAIR - Could we go to Mr Moore's presentation.

Mr MOORE - Just to start off I would like to reiterate a couple of things that Leslie said. From my point of view, I hardly knew that all this was going to happen until the Macks started appearing. Perhaps I don't keep my ear to the ground very well but, anyway, I am in a similar situation to Leslie and his family in that regard. He mentioned that one of the original committee men resigned from the committee. I know that to be a fact and I have spoken to three people who were on that committee and they all said that virtually the opening remark was, 'We're not here to discuss the difference between The Sideling and the Lilydale route, we're here to discuss the best ways around the Lilydale route, so forget any other discussions about that'. So I, too, have doubts about the public consultation process.

CHAIR - If I could interrupt you for a moment, Mr Moore. Mr Bissett, would you like to e-mail your power-point presentation to Mr Donnelly? That shows that map which you had, proposing Scottsdale A and it would be to the committee's benefit.

Mr BISSETT - Okay.

CHAIR - Thank you.

Mr MOORE - Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this matter with you today. It is my understanding that the Public Works Committee is contemplating the north-east access route specifically the stage that enters Scottsdale via Listers Lane. I have had brief discussions with Shane Donnelly and he has informed me that this committee is here to deal specifically with this section of road and that, as a committee, you cannot make recommendations to alter what is proposed; your role is either to recommend that the project goes ahead or conversely to recommend that it doesn't at this stage.

It is not my intention today to attempt to convince you either way, but rather to raise some questions that I hope you will be able to get answers to from DIER because I believe that without answers to these questions this committee will find it quite difficult to arrive at a decision.

As a background, I am a north-east resident and have been for every year of my life but one. My business interests are fresh agricultural produce. We move approximately 12 000 tonnes of freight out of this district - that is local freight - and move another 2 000 in that is also packaged here and goes out again. We send it to Hobart, Devonport, Launceston, North West ports and Bell Bay each year.

My family business employs 22 people pretty much all year around and 40 seasonally. I have spoken to dozens of truckies and citizens on this issue.

Notwithstanding all my previous comments, I am first and foremost a taxpayer who is concerned that the State and Federal governments are about to spend the first \$4.5 million of a \$20 million commitment - but we found out that some of that has already been spent anyway on going into the different routes - on a road that may ultimately end up being the road to nowhere.

Let me explain what I mean. My understanding is that the section of road your committee is investigating today is the first stage of the upgrade of the Scottsdale to Launceston via Lilydale and Rocherlea route. It has been reported that \$20 million has been so far committed but I understand that to complete the project fully it will cost taxpayers around \$70 million if a bypass at Rocherlea is constructed and possibly even more should it be upgraded as a full B-double route, including a Lilydale bypass as well. That leads me to the first question that I would like to ask this committee to seek answers to before signing off and agreeing to spend \$4.5 million on this section. What is the total cost of the upgrade of this route expected to be? That is a similar question to that asked by almost all of you this morning actually.

My second question to the committee is premised on the assumption that the route as currently proposed goes ahead and that all Launceston, Hobart and, in the absence of an upgrade of the Batman Bridge and the Frankford Highway, the majority of north-west-bound heavy vehicle traffic will enter Launceston at Rocherlea. And, further, that Launceston residents will very quickly get tired of the heavy vehicle traffic travelling via the Charles Street Bridge and down Wellington Street to the Southern Outlet, as will transport operators who, at peak times, will need to travel through the heart of

Launceston through 16 sets of traffic lights. I would suggest that any semitrailer loads of cattle that are on their way to the Longford Abattoirs coming from Gladstone might just be about ready for a pee and a poo by the time they get to the Charles Street Bridge.

CHAIR - Have you got a solution?

Laughter.

Mrs NAPIER - They need a truck wash in the middle of Wellington Street.

Mr MOORE - Something like that would do.

My second question is therefore if you agree to spend \$4.5 million on this section committing the taxpayer to this route, what are the expected costs associated with an eastern bypass or link roads around Launceston and could these costs be in the vicinity of another \$30 to \$50 million, as I have been led to believe?

My third question goes to port access for heavy vehicles from the north-east and by port access I mean both at Bell Bay and also at Devonport for the *Spirits of Tasmania* and Burnie for other freight. I have spoken to many north-east trucking companies and every single one of them has said that for Bell Bay their preferred route from Scottsdale will still be the Scottsdale to George Town via Bridport route. However, even if the routes were identical I am informed that transport operators will still prefer the Bridport route because its gradient is better.

Now for travel to the north-west ports I am advised that even with the slightly longer route from Scottsdale to the Batman Bridge via Bridport, transport operators will still prefer this route because of the gradient issue if they are to access the ports via the Batman Bridge/Frankford Highway route. However this raises a key issue regarding the truck route into the north-west and brings me into my third question which has a number of parts. Is it the intention of DIER to upgrade the Batman Bridge, which surely will require extra maintenance works at least if heavy vehicle traffic increases markedly and is it DIER's intention to also upgrade the Frankford Highway should B-double and heavy vehicle transport increase?

If it is, what is the expected future cost of this upgrade? If this isn't planned for, is this because there is an expectation that heavy vehicle traffic to the north-west is best served by the Lilydale-Rocherlea route via the centre of Launceston again on to Highway 1 for access to the north-west coast? If the answer is yes then this brings us back to question two and the costs associated with the necessary construction of a link road to keep all this heavy traffic out of the Launceston city centre.

This brings me to my fourth question. It appears to me that the choice of the Scottsdale to Launceston route via Lilydale and Rocherlea has a number of financial implications for taxpayers should this route go ahead. Obviously a Launceston ring road is one, as is the possibility of the need for further capital works on the Batman Bridge and Frankford Highway.

Based on the information that I have, should the committee sign off on this first section of the Scottsdale to Launceston via Lilydale route you will virtually be committing

taxpayers to spend at least \$20 million on this route as once this section is completed there is in reality, I would assume, no turning back.

Once this route is underway, as I mentioned earlier, the total upgrade cost, I understand, is expected to be over \$70 million. On top of this cost will be the undoubted future expenses associated with a ring road or link road around Launceston's eastern suburbs to keep heavy traffic out of the city, let us say at a cost to taxpayers of around \$30 to \$50 million. If we presume that the Launceston link road is built this will negate the need for an upgrade of the Batman Bridge and Frankford Highway. However, the total cost of the combined projects - Scottsdale to Launceston via Lilydale and a Launceston link road - could reasonably be expected to be in excess of \$100 million. Bearing in mind that the Scottsdale-Bridport-Bell Bay route will still carry out most of the freight to our nearest port, it seems to me to be a waste of taxpayers' money to upgrade the Lilydale route at all.

The fourth question that I mentioned I would ask, is this: as the Tasman Highway already enters Launceston at St Leonards and Waverley with easy access to Highway 1 for southern and north-west based freight, why wasn't this route considered as the heavy main route for the north-east? It is around a 60-kilometre journey from Launceston to Scottsdale and the first 35 kilometres from Launceston to Scottsdale has already been upgraded, apart from 6 kilometres between Nunamara and Targa but both major political parties have committed money to do this section up as part of their election promises in the past few weeks.

The Sideling is 14 kilometres of winding road that would obviously need significant work. However I find it difficult to believe that the cost of these works and the realignments needed on the entry to Scottsdale could be anywhere remotely like the cost of the Scottsdale/Lilydale route and future Launceston bypass. So therefore, the second part of my fourth question to the committee is very simply: could you get an estimate of the cost of upgrading the Tasman Highway/The Sideling route before you agree to spend taxpayers' money on the Scottsdale to Lilydale route? I believe it would be a far cheaper option and a far better outcome, all things considered. No doubt as part of DIER's studies they will have already costed this option so it should not be too onerous a task.

Once the committee has this costing, I would request that you consider the cost of upgrading The Sideling/Tasman Highway route versus the Scottsdale/Lilydale route in the context of the consequential financial implications of choosing either route and further that you also take into account that when these options were looked at a number of years ago the north-east had a rail freight option which as of last month it no longer has. Simplot was operating and potatoes were not required to be transported to the Ulverstone plant as they are now, and whilst a pulpmill had been thought of it was a long way from being a reality, unlike now.

Consider the situation for Launceston should the pulpmill be built on the north-west coast and the Scottsdale via Lilydale and Rocherlea route is chosen. Millions of tonnes of timber, along with potatoes and all our north-eastern livestock, produce and milk will more than likely travel from Rocherlea via the centre of Launceston to reach its destination.

I now thank the committee for its time and in finishing I just wanted to leave you with a comment from one of your committee members, the Hon. Sue Napier MHA, who summed things up pretty well in Parliament recently when she said:

'The people of the north-east are saying they have a problem now about how they ensure that heavy freight is transmitted. So I might well ask the Launceston City Council how they feel about freight coming through the Lilydale-Golconda road, through Wellington Street and back outwards Burnie for the pulpmill. Or it might even be that the Government will need to listen a little more closely to many truckies who are saying, "I don't care what you say, The Sideling is the better road that ought to have been upgraded to provide good access" '.

CHAIR - A very well considered statement.

Mr MOORE - Thank you very much. I hope I didn't embarrass you by including that in any way.

Mrs NAPIER - Most people don't read *Hansard*.

Mr MOORE - Some people get bored.

Laughter.

CHAIR - Thanks very much, Mr Moore. We are open to questions.

Mr HALL - Glen, I was just thinking about your alternate routes. In the latter part of your submission you were talking about the Tasman Highway and The Sideling and I was just thinking about your easier access. I understand what you are saying about going through Wellington Street and via the Lilydale-Rocherlea route - through the middle of Launceston. I can understand that fully. I was just thinking about it as I came through from home in Deloraine this morning, I came up over The Sideling and I was trying to think, 'Is it not quite a tortuous route to get from the Bass Highway across to the Tasman Highway'. Just explain to me which way you would use that better as a truck route?

Mr MOORE - Well, let us take coming from Scottsdale. Since the closing of Abels Hill Road the trucks now go down all the way to the roundabout back up St Leonards Road and across Johnsons Road, Quarantine Road and then back out onto the freeway to get down to the Bass Highway. Abels Hill Road, if you look at it - and I know Denise has seen it - right at the bottom of it there is a vacant block that comes right off and goes straight down to where a lovely big roundabout could be put onto Johnsons Road. You could do up the rest of Abels Hill Road, put sound barriers down the back of all the houses and not affect one entrance, from my limited engineering experience which is nil, onto the present outlet of the houses and go straight down over the corner and be in Abels Hill Road again. So to answer your question, Mr Hall, I would go, as I went back tonight, rather than going into Launceston I would go straight down what we call Abels Hill Road and stop and have a look to the left before you go around to the right on Abels Hill Road to go down and across Johnsons Road, Quarantine Road and you are virtually on the highway.

Mr HALL - That answers the question, thank you.

CHAIR - Any further questions? There is no question here but the numerous studies which have been conducted into access to the north-east have all concluded, as we heard earlier, that the Golconda Road is the desired preferred route. What do you then say to that, given your submission and your suggestion that the Tasman Highway should be more closely looked at?

Mr MOORE - I would say, Mr Harriss, as I have pointed out previously, most of the studies were conducted before Simplot closed, before TasRail closed and before the pulpmill was as heavily mooted as it is now. What I am trying to say here is: should we be checking how much the situation has changed?

Mrs NAPIER - Can I ask in relation to the potential traffic, if it is found that the cost of building a safer road across The Sideling itself - that 14 kilometres - is too expensive and, secondly, is more likely to run into huge environmental concerns - if you cannot do that is it a reasonable suggestion that - I think it is called Patersons Road that comes out near Nunamara -

Ms McINTYRE - Prossers Forest Road.

Mrs NAPIER - Yes.

Mr MOORE - That goes from Nunamara through to Lilydale.

Mrs NAPIER - Prossers Forest Road could be an alternative route by which heavy traffic could be redirected away from the middle of Launceston?

Mr MOORE - I had a meeting with Jim Cox about that - and I apologise for the fact that I haven't got the figures with me - but I think that put something like an extra 23 kilometres onto a journey if you were to do that, rather than going straight over The Sideling. I could stand corrected on that but I could give you a phone call within 20 minutes of leaving here to tell you the exact distance because I did measure it the following week after I had a meeting with Jim Cox. He said, 'We've got you covered, mate. We're going to put you into Lilydale back over to Nunamara through Prossers Forest Road and back into Launceston and then back down the Waverley roundabout and then back up St Leonards Road' - all over the countryside, to be honest with you.

Mrs NAPIER - So the 23 kilometres -

Mr MOORE - The road could be done but it's very illogical, in my opinion.

Mrs NAPIER - So the extra 23 kilometres is from Scottsdale via the Lilydale-Golconda Road but taking Prossers Forest Road to connect with Nunamara and two lots of Launceston connections as compared to Scottsdale through -

Mr MOORE - What I measured I think was either there or the outlet at the Southern Outlet where you would head down to the north-west, which seemed to me to be the most logical point. From there you could go in any direction you want. I believe DIER's study might have been done from Charles Street.

Ms McINTYRE - I believe the NETAS distances were.

Mr MOORE - If you were coming from this side of town it would be quite logical for you to go to the Charles Street Bridge on most occasions. If you went through Lilydale you would have to more than likely go to the Charles Street Bridge to get into Launceston or wherever you were going.

Mrs NAPIER - I remember seeing a map at one stage that also suggested that a road could be constructed basically on the eastern side of Rocherlea and coming across and connecting with The Sideling road. Would such a link road have -

Mr MOORE - Is that not part of the principle of the eastern ring road.

Mrs NAPIER - I think it is.

McINTYRE - The eastern ring road that has been constructed -

CHAIR - It might be hard to pick up on the microphone and it may be an appropriate time to engage DIER in further questions. Mrs Napier, if you would like to continue.

Mrs NAPIER - I saw a map at one stage - I am sure it was during the NETAS studies - that said it could be possible - I think it was suggested that this was a Launceston City Council responsibility - to have a ring road basically going from the eastern side of Rocherlea, across to connect up with the current Tasman Highway.

Ms McINTYRE - I believe that is an option that Launceston City Council have been pushing.

Mrs NAPIER - And that is separate from the internal link road that would deal with some of the internal street roads.

Ms McINTYRE - I have become involved in the latter stages so my detailed knowledge of previous studies is fairly limited, but I understand there have been various options considered around the Launceston area. At the time of the decision on the Lilydale-Golconda and the start of the NETAS study, the study that Glen mentioned earlier, there had been numerous studies before then. The NETAS study was to prioritise a set of projects in the knowledge that it identified priority routes and the Lilydale-Golconda had already been identified through numerous studies and the more recent strategic review had been in, I think, 1999-2000. That defined Lilydale-Golconda into the future as the road that money should be targeted at to facilitate the economic development. So since 1999 until now, there has been no detailed study on costing of the Tasman Highway or improvement through The Sideling. That has been done previously. I think the latest study of The Sideling was 1991 but that had already been discounted by the time the NETAS study was established and a steering committee formed.

Through the study it was realised that there were safety issues on the Tasman Highway obviously because of this being the B-double route - the Bridport main road being the B-double and there was the main access to the north-west via the Batman Highway via Frankford, Birrallee and onto the Bass Highway and that was the freight route to the north-west. Safety issues obviously need to be addressed in the section between

Scottsdale and Bridport but the priority would be the Lilydale-Golconda. So we have gone past that stage of weighing up options and that was basically 1999-2000 at that last stage when the department looked at an option.

Mrs NAPIER - So you are saying that in relation to the cost of upgrading the 14-kilometre section of The Sideling, there is no recent costing?

Ms McINTYRE - There is no current costing.

Mrs NAPIER - Do you know what the 1991 costing was?

Ms McINTYRE - I couldn't give you a figure because it would mislead, I think.

Mr MOORE - Could you give a percentage against this road?

CHAIR - Glen, could I just intervene. As I said, it is not an appropriate forum for questioning to go back and forth amongst the witnesses. It is our role, as members of the committee, to question the witnesses and I think Sue is probably going to pursue that. Denise has indicated it would be misleading if she were to provide that figure -

Ms McINTYRE - It would be off the top of my head and I don't think it would be appropriate.

CHAIR - If we want the figure to make some assessment or evaluation we could simply get the figure.

Ms McINTYRE - I can certainly give you the information, but not here today.

Mrs NAPIER - Through you, Mr Chairman - I wonder if we could request that an as recent as is possible estimate of the cost of upgrading the 14-kilometre section of The Sideling be provided, together with an indicative figure that would bring it up to what projected current costs would be.

Ms McINTYRE - I would have to say that we would not be looking at upgrading The Sideling. The previous study that I am talking about actually bypassed The Sideling, but the study includes -

Mrs NAPIER - My recollection is that when I was minister we were told \$20 million and that was even that forest back road -

Mr HALL - The southern side or the northern side?

Mrs NAPIER - On the southern side.

Mr HALL - Corkereys Road.

Mrs NAPIER - Corkereys Road - it was a variation of that.

Mr BEST - Can we also know what category that road would be - you do not have to answer it today?

Ms McINTYRE - Under the current hierarchy the Bridport main road between Scottsdale and the East Tamar Highway is a category 3 road. The Lilydale-Golconda has been categorised as a 2 and the Tasman, I believe, as a 4 or a 5.

Mr BEST - But the question is would it remain that with your calculation on these other roads - you mentioned a name a moment ago -

Mrs NAPIER - Corkereys Road.

Mr BEST - Yes.

Ms McINTYRE - Unless we reviewed the total strategy of the road link to the north-east, the category won't change. It has been defined through previous studies and through the most recent as a category 4 or 5.

Mr BEST - But is it category 5 because of The Sideling - you said it is bypassing The Sideling?

Ms McINTYRE - It is not to do with The Sideling, it is to do with the function. There is a whole range of criteria used to categorise the road. Its function is that of a feeder, but it is considered to be a low-traffic volume and not encouraged as a freight road, so it is a lower categorisation. Does that make any sense?

Mr BEST - Not really. It doesn't make sense to me at all, but anyway.

Mrs NAPIER - Through you, Mr Chairman - a number of questions have been raised about the freight and main highway strategies that are associated with in this case redeveloping the Lilydale-Golconda Road and the point was raised that there had been significant industry changes in the north-east since many of those decisions were made. All milk is now going out of the area rather than being processed in the area; all potatoes are now going out of the area whereas they had previously been processed within the area. However, it is an area that is expanding its agricultural production because it has opportunities of getting expanded water for irrigation which will increase production. What is the response of the department from a planning point of view as to whether the Lilydale-Golconda Road that has been identified as part of the State solution is now adequate to meet those changed circumstances?

Ms McINTYRE - I can only say at this particular point in time we haven't considered the need to review. The study that was undertaken looked at freight demands and needs - there was a lot of discussion with industry. There have been a couple of issues that have come out of the box recently, like the rail closure. We see the need to look at the main road in terms of safety because that is the B-double route, but not to change or review the type of focus.

Mrs NAPIER - One of the issues that will further maximise the potential impact on roads is the question of where the site for the pulpmill will be. The north-east, more than any other area, has a more advanced plantation base, which is the essence of a pulpmill. It is my understanding that there are two key reasons that might prevent the north from getting the pulpmill: one is lack of access to water, and the other is the recent trend of

putting a pulpmill in the middle of the resource, in effect. So there is a high probability that a pulpmill could go to the north-west coast. What would you envisage to be the main trucking route for that increased log traffic?

Ms McINTYRE - The main trucking route currently is the Bridport main road and the East Tamar Highway. To go to the north-west across the Batman, the East Frankford, Birrallee and then down to the Bass Highway.

Mrs NAPIER - And in the light of the question that was raised about the Batman Bridge, can you give the committee a guarantee that the Batman Bridge is in a sufficient sustainable long-term state that it can withstand an insignificant increase in traffic?

Mr MILLAR - We're not in a position to say.

Ms McINTYRE - I can't respond to that.

CHAIR - Mrs Napier, you made the comment that it may be is outside what we are looking at here. Clearly the responsibility of this committee is to consider the appropriate and wise expenditure being put before us and if this committee is not convinced that it is appropriate and wise expenditure then, just for the information of those who might not be familiar with what this committee is charged with doing, we can only do one of two things - approve or reject this project before us. We cannot suggest to the Government modifications on this proposal. You need to understand that but no, I think the line of questioning has been pertinent to the committee because it is a strategic issue and not just a small component which is being commenced now. I think it is very appropriate the questioning has gone the way it has to thrash that out and I think we have been treading on perfectly appropriate ground to satisfy ourselves that this proposal ought to be approved or indeed rejected because it is part of a larger strategy.

Mr MOORE - I can answer the question on how much freight the railway carted out. Last year it was 61 000 tonnes and at 25-tonne loads, that is 2 400 semi-trailer loads approximately.

Mrs NAPIER - So, 2 400 semi-trailer loads.

Mr MOORE - I only did it in my head. If someone has a calculator they can check that for me but it is a 25-tonne load approximately.

Mr HALL - The only question I have to Mr Moore is in regard to the hypothetical work across The Sideling. Obviously it does give them the best access to the southern disposition of freight - to the south of Tasmania - but we do not agree that in the north-west that probably the best route still be along Flinders Highway, across the Batman Bridge and through that way rather than going down the Tamar.

Mr MOORE - I understand the B-doubles at the moment do not use the Batman Bridge because they are not allowed over it with full capacity.

Ms McINTYRE - I cannot answer that. I was not prepared for supplementary questions.

Mr MOORE - I understand that that is the case. A fully laden B-double is not allowed on the Batman Bridge, as I have been told, so at present they have to go down through Launceston if they want to go to the north-west coast.

Mr HALL - It would be useful to get a clarification on that.

Mrs NAPIER - I think we need to request information in relation to Batman Bridge capacity, limitations and where issues associated with the Batman Bridge sit as far as major freight traffic is concerned. The whole point about a proper freight route is that you maximise your local traffic in order to get the economic benefit and that is one of the reasons why people go to B-doubles and so on. We particularly need to get a synopsis of the department's analysis of the current status of the Batman Bridge as part of the major heavy freight route and what the projections are for it. Even when I was minister I had been told the Batman Bridge had a fixed life. But it might have changed; they might have found some way of fixing it.

Just a couple of other questions. What would your estimate be then of the total cost of upgrading the route through to Rocherlea?

Ms McINTYRE - My understanding is that at the beginning of this study it was acknowledged that it was a multi-million dollar project and that it would be costly to upgrade.

Mrs NAPIER - That section of the road from the end of this project to Blumont, how many kilometres is that particular section - the next section?

Ms McINTYRE - About six.

Mrs NAPIER - And it is going to cost possibly \$10 million to do just six kilometres. I guess that gives us an estimate of what we are up against in terms of cost.

Mr MILLAR - But bearing in mind that that is on a totally new alignment, as opposed to much of the upgrade of the Lilydale/Golconda Road which would utilise the existing alignment. Your costs might be somewhat less but I do think that that is a good indicative way of approaching it.

Mrs NAPIER - The cost of an eastern bypass would be?

Ms McINTYRE - I have no idea.

Mrs NAPIER - You have no idea? I think it is part of the NETAS study actually. If we could request from the department information on what the current projections are for costs on what that option would be.

Mr MOORE - Ian Routley stated in a newspaper article about August last year that the eastern bypass would be around \$35 000.

Mr HALL - Good value that one!

Mr MOORE - Sorry - \$35 million.

Laughter.

Mr BEST - We heard some evidence on option A and we heard that \$8.5 million versus \$14.3 -

Ms McINTYRE - I said earlier that those figures were probably not as relevant. They were very high-level conceptual figures. What we have now is very detailed design costings for the project and until we get into the finer detail I do not know exactly what issues there might be that need addressing and what structures may be involved. I am not sure that we can use those two comparisons fairly. On a very high level one could put some numbers on a page and compare it with other options at the same high level investigation, as opposed to a very detailed design that is going into the nitty-gritty of property impacts and property costs, et cetera.

Mr MARTIN - Mr Chairman, I just wanted to touch on a couple of comments that were made and make some comments from a council perspective. Mr Bissett earlier indicated in his opening address that some of the processes may have been flawed, that council staff were not interested in any other route and those types of things. Just for the record I would just like to clear up that council's position, right from the start, was that we want a category 2 highway access into the north-east. That was our position.

Where it was did not matter. We just wanted a decent road up here for the benefit of economic and social development into the future. But when you go back and have a look at the studies that have been done and the processes that I have been involved in on behalf of council - and I am the only person in this room who has been involved in all the studies that have been undertaken in the last 11 years, and that includes the Northern Integrated Transport Plan of which Launceston City Council is a member, as is every other council in the north of the State - you will see that they clearly outlined that the Lilydale-Golconda Main Road is the preferred route. So on the basis of that information, which has been reported to council, council has formed their opinion and there has been no bias in it. There would be no sense in any council officer or councillor for that matter favouring one route over the other.

The second point I want to make is that when we got down to the detail of looking at the things in the NETAS study, there is extensive community consultation undertaken as part of that study. That was one of the reasons why it cost so much money and when it came to the access into Scottsdale, whether it was part A, B, C, D or whatever, again councillors or council staff - particularly me - had no preferred option about whether it should go here or there or whatever. We left the economic and the engineering analyses undertaken by the department and its consultant, to spell those things out for us.

There were also some public presentations made here at Scottsdale outlining the proposals before they were finally given as a final recommendation and there has also been the opportunity for everyone to participate and to give comments, written submissions or whatever, over a long period of time in those processes that have been undertaken. Now, if people had not seen them, we - and when I say we, I mean the department - cannot do any more than advertise and put as much information in the paper as we can.

Council from its perspective has continued to provide information to the press, particularly the local press, about what is happening, where we are, what stage we are at, et cetera, so that there is the opportunity for the community to read it. If they see something there they do not like, there is every opportunity to come back to council or the department. We have particularly asked them to go to the department because the department is now at the stage where they are handling these types of things and not the council.

Also I would like to point out that when I first became aware that there were some options without going into Scottsdale and that the most likely outcome could be through option D or something that might affect the Bissetts' property, I personally contacted the landowner so it would not be a surprise when it came out. As soon as I was aware, I rang up the landowners and let them know and I actually discussed it with Mr Bissett in the office here to say, 'This is a possibility. It is not certain yet, but it might affect your property.'

CHAIR - And Mr Bissett acknowledged that.

Mr MARTIN - That is exactly right. I think Mr Bissett's words were that it would go through his property. At that particular point in time there was no conclusion that it would. I knew that it would come through these types of stages and that there should be every opportunity for Mr Bissett to say something about what was and had been occurring. I can also mention that, from the mayor's perspective and in his absence, he has consulted with me on every occasion when we were talking about the road. I have been the principal officer involved when it comes to talking about it publicly, putting out media releases or putting letters together. I can say from my perspective that in those discussions with the mayor he never had a preference for A, B, C, D or whatever. He let the conclusions be made by the economic, engineering and social types of analysis being undertaken. As far as the comments about \$10 million and those types of things are concerned, I have not personally heard him say that. He might have done, but I am going on the objective things that I know about.

I think it would probably be worthwhile if the department were able to provide your committee with the information that is in the report on Scottsdale A. Scottsdale A was analysed and, as with B, C and D and those types of things, during the process of arriving at the recommendation as to where these current road projects were going. In relation to the comparison of \$14 million with \$8 million, it is worthwhile bearing in mind that if Scottsdale D is accepted as one of the routes, there is that six kilometres of road down here to be upgraded which is quite some millions of dollars -

CHAIR - Bridport Main Road?

Mr MARTIN - Yes. So that needs to be added in because it is not as if we are going to save \$6 million or \$4 million or whatever the situation is. That is not true. And I think that part of the analysis was done when they were looking at those types of options. A couple of comments in relation to access that is currently used by Mr Bissett and others: council understand that if that access down West Minstone Road is closed off, they will need to access those properties down George Street and up through the main street. That is fully acknowledged by council. Farm machinery does that now. What council are

saying is that we do not believe that it is an extra 50 per cent or an extra 25 per cent or something like that. We are saying that the impact is minimal.

In relation to the strategies of the whole discussion which we have heard today - because we seem to have gone right into Launceston and going up the north-west coast and down to Hobart, which is most appropriate - I think it would also be worthwhile if the committee wished to, to get a briefing on that but I would like to make a few comments while we are here because there have been a lot of comments already made. Many discussions have emanated from the steering committee - and I have been involved in nearly every one, including the Birralee-Frankford Main Road, and the Northern Integrated Transport Plan which looks at linkages into Launceston, through Launceston, out to the north-west coast, down and up the East and West Tamar Highway. If there is a ring road put in which will link the East Tamar Highway to the Bass Highway or to the Midlands Highway, this will fit into it. I think one day there will be a ring road put in around Launceston to try to get rid of that congestion of traffic lights and those types of things.

This Lilydale-Golconda route will fit into that forward-thinking strategy down the track so it is not as if these projects associated with that road will be a waste of money. Again, I referred to the Northern Integrated Transport Plan which has been signed off by all councils in the north of the State and DIER and which refers to the Lilydale-Golconda Main Road as the best strategic route into the north-east.

I think that our submission has briefly covered the previous work that has been done and pulled out the analysis that has been done on The Sideling route but if the committee wants further information on that route it is obviously freely available through those previous reports that have been done. From an overall summary, from council's perspective I can only reiterate once again that this is the most important, significant, economic and social development for the whole of north-eastern Tasmania and we think that any further delays are only going to hinder that goal.

Mrs NAPIER - What is available in relation to the analysis of the option of category A?

Ms McINTYRE - I was just looking through this - this is a copy of the recommendations from the final report. This is actually a copy of the recommendations comparing Scottsdale A, B, D and ring-road upgrades. We will give you a copy of this, which quite clearly recommends Scottsdale D. The ultimate alignment is a combination of an existing upgrade and Scottsdale D, I believe.

CHAIR - Is that something you want to tender as evidence to the Committee -

Ms McINTYRE - This is just two pages. The department went on after that to refine options A, B, C, D basically or B, C, D and a combination of a couple of others. They had Pitt and Sherry undertake engineering investigation of all those four routes and they had separately GH&D undertake planning and environmental investigation. Pitt and Sherry undertook the engineering and cost assessment. GH&D undertook the environmental and planning and they both came out with the route alignment that we are looking at today. They were separate undertakings.

Mrs NAPIER - Through you, Mr Chairman - could we ask for the copy of the analyses of GH&D and Pitt and Sherry? That might be the way to go.

CHAIR - Yes. While you are thinking of Mr Kettle would like to give some evidence to the committee so if somebody would like to make some room please at the table we might get Mr Kettle to come forward.

Mr KEN KETTLE WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR - Thank you. Mr Kettle, proceed as you feel comfortable.

Mr KETTLE - Thank you, Mr Chairman. I certainly will not hold the committee up too much today, but what I want to discuss basically will come perhaps at a later stage if the road proceeds in its present form towards my property. I feel there have been, though not necessarily through this process at the moment, but in the process of the NETAS report, and what has come out of it, some of the DIER comments and what has come out of them, some anomalies undertaken. I would like to comment on one of them from the NETAS report. We met with the commission here not long ago - I am not sure but I think they had nine transport operators represented, a couple of them local - and it was stated by DIER that Trevor Hookway was totally happy that the main access route should be the Lilydale/Golconda Road. I have spoken to Trevor on a few occasions and he has emphatically denied it. He said, 'Why would I? Most of my freight goes to Hobart. I am over The Sideling.'

That is just one example. John pointed out here that in relation to route A, from Carins Road onto the Bridport Road would entail several kilometres of upgrade. I tell you what, I would like to buy some land off you mate. I do not reckon it is even a kilometre from Frank Irwin's corner to the dump, so I do not see where there would be a need for several million dollars to be upgraded from the point where the road has already been upgraded to a point where it could divert and lead down through the Carins Road.

In relation to the cost factor involved in putting in the new road and certain upgrading, to me the A route would certainly eliminate a lot of hostility, I suppose is one way of putting it, associated with the Bissetts' problem and my problems, Letts' problems and Gavin Turner's problems - people who will all be affected by that existing road being upgraded down through there at this stage. Like everyone else in the north east, I believe that certainly we do need a main access route, but is that the right way to go about it? The cost savings that could come from taking route A could alleviate problems down the Golconda Road near the dams by putting up a retainer barrier there to avoid vehicle accidents and perhaps loss of life. I for one should know, my brother was one of those people who was involved in an accident and died there. I feel that that is basically all that is needed. From my point of view, I feel that certainly the route A would be a better proposition.

It is pretty easy for DIER to come up with answers and say that you tackle them when they are encroaching onto your property but in my situation will be an ongoing thing. I can foresee problems. I do understand your committee's perspective in relation to what we are dealing with today basically for this section, but I would not like to see this first part of the road go straight through and line up 50 metres from my house. What was put to the commission hearing that we had here before is that it comes from Blumont end aims directly across the front of my house again and then resolves the bit in the middle - and those were DIER's comments. There is no need to shake your head; it was your comment and I can quote it. That was put to the commission for those parts. Perhaps things may have been taken out of context; I do not know. I am afraid that I will leave that up to your committee.

CHAIR - Any questions?

Mrs NAPIER - If I can just clarify the point you are raising. The implication is that we would assume that this is the next proposed alignment - that is the one that cuts across your property is it?

Mr KETTLE - It is. I did have discussions with Denise here a week ago and I spoke about that. I said, 'I would not like to see this first stage done - a nice big new highway, just pointing across directly at my house and then another stage done and come back, with that going across my house and then let's battle it out and see where it is going to go from there. She assured me that that would not be the case so hopefully it will not be. I suppose stranger things could happen.

Mrs NAPIER - So following on from the question of costings of the alternative design - setting this section aside - we are estimating that the cost of Blumont Park to where it is currently proposed will be across fresh land - that is about six kilometres or something like that of new road which is estimated to potentially cost \$10 million. If the cost of that particular section of six kilometres is \$10 million, I guess we could then assume that if instead that was directed towards Bridport Road on category A, we would only need another \$4 million, would we not, which makes the cost of that category A the same as our current two projects, this one and the project that we are looking at - the same cost. The only difference is that we are not taking into account the cost of upgrading a one-kilometre section of the Bridport Road.

Ms McINTYRE - My understanding is that the cost of construction with the costs quoted in that -

Mrs NAPIER - That is an old figure is it not?

Ms McINTYRE - Yes, and it was for a whole new alignment from Blumont Park, through bush, through an area of about six kilometres outside the town zones of Scottsdale - that is correct - along the Bridport Main Road. So the construction cost is that. Also there was still the extra road here - the Bridport Main Road - that would have been required and it was a longer route in total to get to Scottsdale. So it was not just cost that knocked it out. It was a combination of factors. There were comparisons of length, vehicle operating costs, goal achievements, social and economic factors, et cetera. There was a whole range of criteria used in assessing the higher level - A being an upgrade of the existing alignment - that knocked out route A. So if the committee seriously wanted to say, 'We will not approve this, go back and look at option A,' then we would have to look at it in the same context again, and it was knocked out of the process early on because it had the lowest benefit cost ratio of all of the other options that were given.

Mrs NAPIER - The categorisation of this road is to be a 2. What is the categorisation of the Bridport-Scottsdale Road to be?

Ms McINTYRE - It is a 3.

Mrs NAPIER - And the difference is what?

Ms McINTYRE - Basically the standard of construction and the use. Between Scottsdale and Bridport is recognised as being the residential area of Bridport. This is the service centre for that residential area so there is a commuter proportion of traffic and also in recognition that it carries freight.

Mrs NAPIER - All of the studies have indicated that the Bridport-Scottsdale-Flinders Highway route is to be a trucking route - a freight route associated with Bell Bay and also as part of access for freight to the north-west coast. This one too - A - is for trucking and eventually for heavier freight but for trucking and tourism and a whole range of other things in terms of access, so why would one argue that the standard of construction for a category 3 road that allows for B-doubles, was not going to be at least equivalent to a category 2 which use it for a long time and is handling B-doubles?

Ms McINTYRE - In terms of construction there is probably not a lot of difference in standards.

Mrs NAPIER - That is what I was thinking. I am not trying to be difficult, because you have just come into the job and I guess you are trying to take in all the information and that is a tough call. But it seems to me that what people are saying is that we have to get this right because there are implications down the track. You are not going to build this and suddenly change your mind and say you want to go somewhere else. Is it not a fact that the Bridport-Scottsdale Road will have to be basically upgraded to pretty well almost the same standard as this Lilydale-Golconda Road?

Ms McINTYRE - The Bridport Main Road is probably for the most part a higher standard than a lot of the Golconda Road anyway so what we are looking at in terms of between Scottsdale and Bridport is widening the sealed section to allow greater safety - there is a perception that it is not safe.

Mrs NAPIER - Because it is built on sand.

Ms McINTYRE - So what we have in mind for that is something on the shoulder edges.

Mrs NAPIER - So in effect when we can compare A with the category C that we are currently examining, there is no requirement to build in an extra cost factor for upgrading, in effect, the tip to Scottsdale because it is already part of the project. Is it not only fair to compare the construction costs and the feasibility of A with C only as much as they connect to the Bridport Road? I accept the fact that the trucking distance is going to be longer and the travelling distance is going to be longer, but if cost is taken into account unless there is some spotted quoll and some other environmental issues through the bush - and there might be in those reports - then it seems to me that the cost of what is currently being proposed is going to be the same as the cost of doing A.

Ms McINTYRE - That is quite probable. The costing is very similar.

Mr MILLAR - You do miss out on safety benefits of upgrading the current proposal before you.

Mrs NAPIER - Yes, I think that is a fair comment.

Mr MILLAR - There are probably two safety issues.

Mrs NAPIER - Because they have taken on that cost rather than the council and I would appreciate the council would much rather have the cost taken off them and that is fair enough.

Mr MILLAR - There is probably two safety issues. One is protecting the cars from going down into the dam and eliminating that level crossing towards Scottsdale.

Mrs NAPIER - I accept that. John, you might know of whether there are some environmental issues through that A corridor.

Mr MARTIN - It is not so much the environmental issues. Clearly we are talking about the link between Scottsdale and Launceston. If you talk about the link between Scottsdale and Launceston, when you talk about where the entrance goes to Scottsdale, it is to get to Scottsdale. At the moment we have B-doubles travelling down a road that really they should not be travelling down, which is the Bridport-Scottsdale Main Road. The only reason they are doing that is that it is the only available access to them and the reason why there is money being spent on it at the moment to widen the existing surfaces is a safety factor more than anything and it is an interim measure over the next five or 10 years so that the route between Scottsdale and Launceston, which will link onto the East Tamar Highway, can be upgraded to take the B-doubles of all the three routes into the north-east - all the heavy vehicular traffic for that matter - down the one strategic road route.

As I said earlier in my submission, the north-east, like any other area of Tasmania, cannot afford to have two or three different strategic freight routes because the State cannot afford them and council cannot afford them. At the moment there is a bit of a bandaid approach to still allow them to go down the other way and to upgrade the road to something like a category 3 road. If you travel down the road and have a look at the widening that has been done, you will see that it is up and down, it is all over the place.

Mrs NAPIER - It needs a major reconstruction.

Mr MARTIN - It is just a bandaid approach at the moment to enable the productivity which you gain from B-doubles for these industries that are up here. To upgrade this entrance into Scottsdale you really do need to take into account the cost of upgrading from Scottsdale down to where it would link on the category A. Let me suggest to you that it is not just a few hundred thousand dollars; it will run into millions of dollars. Those types of things have been analysed by the consultant when they made their recommendations for D. It is not just a preference of council. It is as part of the analysis that is done on an engineering, economic, social and all the other goal-achievement criteria in evaluating which is the best option for the State and the community as part of the entrance to Scottsdale.

Mrs NAPIER - My next question was if we approve this particular section - and I do not think we can answer more than that; we probably need to have a look at the reports and maybe talk to Pitt and Sherry so we can make sure we are absolutely right in doing this - if the alignment that is talked about going through to Blumont Park, which unfortunately apparently goes through Mr Kettle's property, do we just assume that it is going to go

basically in a straight line or is it likely that we will have a you-beaut section past the dams and then we will go on the roller coaster out to Blumont Park? What assumptions are we building in to this decision that in fact the next 10-kilometre section is going to result in better alignment? Is that good or bad news for Mr Kettle?

Ms McINTYRE - Okay. We have a 9.5 kilometre in total alignment that has been approved through the Resource Planning and Development Commission and also by Environment Australia. Our consultants are working on this new site on the rest of that alignment as we speak. There is a short section just west of Oak Dene Road which involves Mr Kettle's property and it involves a property owned by people by the name of Chandler, where we have looked at options both north and south of the Brid River. One has more impact on Mr Kettle and one has more impact on the Chandlers, so there is a little section of a total of about a kilometre that we are awaiting a management decision on. Other than that, the alignment is set.

Mrs NAPIER - You get the better alignment.

Ms McINTYRE - We will get a brand new road alignment with overtaking opportunities and of a very high standard.

Mrs NAPIER - With overtaking opportunities.

Mr MILLAR - Not overtaking lanes but an alignment of a good standard that will give you a straight enough road, if you like.

Mrs NAPIER - You almost had me excited. Passing lanes on a north-east road - fantastic.

Mr MARTIN - Passing lanes are recommended in it.

CHAIR - Any more questions?

Mrs NAPIER - I am not sure what we do with all this information, but it is better to have this debate out now so then we can get on with it.

Mr BEST - We are going to get that information on category A, is that right?

Mrs NAPIER - I take the point that John and a number of others made, that the north-east desperately needs this road. It needs a road, but frankly the aim has got to be, as you say, five to 10 years and \$100 million more money.

Mr MARTIN - Well, \$100 million? I think earlier in my submission I said \$60 million to \$70 million. Your \$100 million would come if you add another \$35 million for the eastern Launceston bypass. At the moment I think that is a little bit irrelevant, but this would link into it, wherever it goes, if it ever happens.

Mrs NAPIER - That is because it outside Dorset, John.

Mr MARTIN - No, but at the moment the vehicles that come from Dorset still go through Launceston or they go across the Batman Bridge so there is no change in terms of that having an effect on the strategic road route into the north-east.

Mrs NAPIER - I think that is the broader issue of the plan, at least to get a connector across to an existing national highway. Yes, that is the quickest route.

CHAIR - Can I on behalf of the committee thank you all for your submissions today. The opportunity to come back and revisit some of the matters has been valuable. Mr Martin, thank you very much for your assistance and indeed for the use of the council chambers. We really do appreciate that. We thank the department staff, Glen and Denise, for the site tour earlier. We appreciate that and if we can ask you now to leave us so we can make some deliberations, whether that be a preliminary deliberation pending the receipt of the further information, or a more indepth one -

Mrs NAPIER - Can I have one more question whilst everyone is here? Mr Bissett said that it would be the preference of the Bissetts to get a written formal agreement for access on that Listers Road. Is that what has been discussed and is that likely to be possible?

Ms McINTYRE - I have not been privy to the latest property discussions, but I do not see any reason why -

Mr BISSETT - It has not been discussed at this stage, Sue, but it is something that I think we will be looking for. We have not got to the stage where we are talking compensation or anything like that and I felt that those sort of things would come into the compensation when we get to that area.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.